



76 ILLUSTRATED PAGES OF TERROR AND SUSPENSE

EERIE

#40

JUNE 1972

EERIE

A WARREN MAGAZINE PDC 75¢ 56320-6

THE BRAIN OF FRANKENSTEIN Page 6



YOU WOULDN'T LISTEN TO HIM...NOW YOU'RE SORRY!
"PITY THE POOR GRAVE DIGGER" Page 68



SO... YOU CLAIM TO BE A STUDENT OF DRACULA, HUNH? YOU KNOW IT ALL, RIGHT? THIS LITTLE EPIC MAY PROVE YOU WRONG. THERE'S GOING TO BE A QUIZ ON THIS.

ERIE'S MONSTER GALLERY

DRACULA'S CASTLE

MOST HISTORIANS AND AFFICIANADOS OF THE GHOULISH AGREE THAT BRAM STOKER'S CLASSIC CHARACTER "DRACULA" WAS BASED ON AN ACTUAL 15TH CENTURY PRINCE OF WALLACHIA, AN AREA NEAR TRANSYLVANIA IN WHAT IS TODAY RUMANIA.

ACTUALLY, THERE WERE **TWO** "DRACULAS" -- VLAD DRACUL (VLAD THE DEVIL) AND HIS **SON** VLAD THE IMPALER. OF THE TWO, STOKER PROBABLY HAD THE YOUNGER PRINCE IN MIND IN HIS NOVEL. VLAD THE IMPALER GOT HIS NAME BY SKEWERING ANYONE HE DIDN'T LIKE ON LARGE POINTED STAKES. HE THEN PLANTED THE IMPALED CORPSES AS A WARNING TO PASSING TRAVELERS!



ACCORDING TO ANCIENT DOCUMENTS AND RECORDED LEGENDS, VLAD THE IMPALER MADE A REGULAR PRACTICE OF FEASTING IN A FOREST SURROUNDED BY HIS IMPALED VICTIMS.

AT THIS TIME, IN THE 1430'S, THE TURKS WERE ATTACKING THAT PART OF RUMANIA, AND VLAD TURNED HIS CRUELTY TOWARDS THEIR INVADING ARMIES. WHEN AMBASSADORS OF THE SULTAN REFUSED TO REMOVE THEIR TURBANS IN HIS PRESENCE, HE IS SAID TO HAVE ORDERED THE TURBANS **NAILED** TO THEIR HEADS!



EERIE

JUNE 1972

NO. 40

EDITOR and PUBLISHER: James Warren

ASSOCIATE EDITOR: J. R. Cochran

COVER: Sanjulian

ARTISTS THIS ISSUE: Auraleon, Jose M. Bea, Jaime Brocal, Sanho Kim, Esteban Maroto, Mike Ploog

WRITERS THIS ISSUE: Don Glut, Sanho Kim, Esteban Maroto, Fred Ott, Buddy Saunders, Steve Skeates

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Follow Dax, the warrior of ages past, as he climbs inside the tree of life, like poor Alice chasing the Mad Hatter.

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The morbid tale of a man condemned to die, alone with his thoughts in the big house, alone with death as it stalks.

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Poor Harry Benett, come home to a house of the dead. Read the Fan story "The Grim Spectre." Plus a profile of Buddy Saunders.

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The cover story! The deathly tale of an old caretaker who warned of vampire bats at loose in the graveyard. Pity!

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EERIE NO. 40, PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY WITH AN ADDITIONAL SPECIAL ISSUE IN NOVEMBER, BY WARREN PUBLISHING CO. PRICE 75c PER COPY. SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: 7 ISSUES (INCLUDING NOVEMBER SPECIAL ISSUE) FOR \$5.50 IN THE U.S. ELSEWHERE: \$6.50. EDITORIAL & BUSINESS OFFICES AT 145 EAST 32ND STREET, N.Y. 10016. SECOND CLASS MAIL PRIVILEGE PENDING AT NEW YORK, N.Y. AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. PRINTED IN U.S.A. ENTIRE CONTENTS COPYRIGHTED © 1972 BY WARREN PUBLISHING CO. NOTHING MAY BE REPRODUCED IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM THE PUBLISHER. CONTRIBUTIONS ARE INVITED PROVIDED THAT RETURN POSTAGE & ENVELOPE ARE ENCLOSED; OTHERWISE MATERIAL CANNOT BE RETURNED. SORRY, NO RESPONSIBILITY CAN BE ACCEPTED FOR UNSOLICITED MATERIAL.

“In Virginia, we’ve often heard reports of mothmen!”



Ken Kelly's cover of EERIE #38 wasn't scary enough. Try and get more blood and gore into those covers!

COLLEEN ROBBINS
Coventry, Conn.

Loved the cover of EERIE #38. It was fantastic. Just about all your covers are better than Creepy's. One complaint I'd like to register. Run more Science Fiction and less Sword & Sorcery. "Stake in the Game" was great while "The Night The Snow Spilled Blood" was fair. Didn't much care for "The Carrier of the Serpent." Why don't you do more stories like "Superhero" in EERIE #32? You're far more handsome than Uncle Creepy, EERIE and don't let anybody tell you different.

DAVID LA PRADE
Roanoke, Va.

Just finished EERIE #38. Pretty good issue, Cousin EERIE. I disagree with letter writer J. W. Zabel when he says that art, not story, is most important. By itself, art doesn't make a story. It's the successful marriage of writing and art that produces a great story. Especially enjoyed "The Night The Snow Spilled Blood" even though I guessed the ending. Best artwork in EERIE #38 was that done by Esteban Maroto on "A Stranger in Hell." The ending of "Stake in the Game" was less than original.

RON GRIFFITH
Agoura, Calif.

Boyl Are you guys stupid! Check out p. 10 of EERIE #38. last panel. (See right—ed.) Doctor Hauser was a vampire and that's why he didn't photograph. Right? What about Dr. Sarno? He photographed okay for a vampire. Get the picture? Shape up, EERIE!

BYRON COULTER
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Some people don't photograph well. The camera breaks everytime they shoot Creepy.

Loved "Stake in the Game" in EERIE #38. It was really outasight. Enjoyed the Monster Gallery piece on "The Mothman of West Virginia" as I live in Virginia and we've often heard reports of the mothman. Creep it up, Cousin.

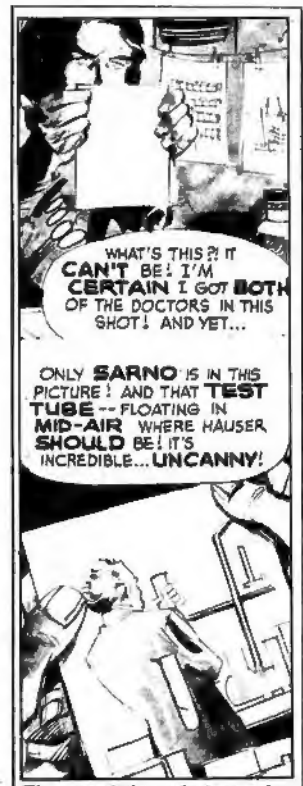
RANDY PENNINGTON
Garten, W. Va.

EERIE and Creepy are just about the best comics around! Dug "Stake in the Game" in EERIE #38. You really ought to publish a paperback of the best of EERIE like Creepy has. Uncle Ringworm shouldn't be the only one with his own paperback. Want you to know that I disagree entirely with J. W. Zabel's letter in EERIE #38. Good artwork and good scripts make a happy combination.

RON DIONNE
Port Jefferson, N.Y.

Please advise artist Ernie Colon that he drew the slave girl Clia with two left feet on the opening page of "Deth-slaker" in EERIE #37.

BOB JESSUP
Springfield, Ill.



The unwitting photographer from "Stake in the Game."

Don't let old stretch face (alias Uncle Creepy) push you around, EERIE.

FRANK HODALSKI
Northlake, Ill.



The only thing he's pushing is his luck.

Best stories I've read in EERIE since I started collecting are as follows. In EERIE #35, "The Comet's Curse," "I am Dead, Egypt, Dead" and "Like Cats and Dogs!" In EERIE #36, "Bad Moon on the Rise" and "Look What They've Done!" Just read EERIE #38 and my favorites were "Stake in the Game" and "The Night The Snow Spilled Blood." Is EERIE in any way related to Uncle Creepy?

PHILLIP HADLEY
Daly City, Calif.



I'm a distant Cousin, Phil. Very distant. In fact, the more distance between us the better.

THE STORY BEHIND STAKE IN THE GAME

Veteran EERIE, Creepy and Vampirella writer Doug Moench comments on his 21-page vampire epic in EERIE #38, "Stake in the Game"—

The major premise of the story involved a lazy (or, if you want to be charitable about it, cunning) vampire, one who works the night shift in a blood bank. The minor premise was photography.

The hero is a photographer for the Sunday supplement who chances upon a blood bank in quest of a photo story. The upshot of the story being that the night doctors who tend the blood bank are vampires. How does the photographer find out? By taking some pictures which fail to reveal both doctors at work. The silver nitrate, a chemical used to develop photographs contains the lethal vampire metal—silver, much like a mirror.

I wanted the story contemporary so as to challenge the belief in vampires. Further, I wanted a cat-and-mouse game, with the photographer pursuing his quarry or "game." Hence, the double-meaning of the title. Because I was after action, a commodity I felt lacking in Warren magazines, there is a three page extended fight scene between the photographer and the vampire.

With "Stake in the Game," I wanted to create a story of substance. Hence, the twenty-one page epic length.

DOUGLAS MOENCH

Stayed up late last night to read EERIE #38. I used to read Creepy but I now find EERIE much better. Top story of the issue was T. Casey Brennan's "The Carrier of the Serpent." Also dug "Stake in the Game."

MATHILDE LABOVICH
Winnipeg, Canada

I would like to thank T. Casey Brennan for writing the allegory "The Carrier of the Serpent" in EERIE #38. It was better than "On The Wings of a Bird" in Creepy #36.

BRAD LINAWEAVER
Tallahassee, Fla.

Publish more stories like "A Rush of Wings" in EERIE #37. I'm tired of complaints about Science Fiction. EERIE needs more S-F. How about an EERIE Fan Club?

BRUCE AKIYAMA
Los Angeles, Calif.



Your wish is my command.

AT LAST! YOU ASKED FOR IT! ANNOUNCING THE NEW EERIE FAN CLUB!

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Who cares if 'A Stranger in Hell' was handled slightly better by Dante?

All I can say about EERIE #38 is wow! Except for the slightly amateurish handling of a tired old theme in "Stake in the Game," EERIE #38 was the most exceptional issue you've put out, bar none! Although I didn't much care for T. Casey Brennan's "Escape From Nowhere World" in Creepy #42, his two stories in EERIE #38, "The Carrier of the Serpent" and "A Stranger in Hell" were fabulous. Who cares if "A Stranger in Hell" was handled slightly better by Dante in his "Inferno?" "The Night The Snow Spilled Blood" by Don McGregor was really beautiful! It was gratifying to see some good, really intelligent stories in EERIE #38. Let me say to letter writer J. W. Zabel (whose letter argued for art and against story in EERIE #38, page 5—ed.), that no amount of artwork could induce me to buy EERIE unless at least one story was at least readable. I'll agree that you may not have a stable of writers like the English poet T. S. Eliot but your writers try hard. In his "Look What They've Done!" in EERIE #36, writer Steve Skeates wasn't saying that all comics readers are "pimp-faced idiots", just some readers and most writers who allow "trite and hackneyed" scripts to be published. I cannot praise EERIE #38 too highly.

H. A. DEVOE
Clarksville, Tenn.

EERIE #38 was absolutely terrific! Ken Kelly's cover was first rate. Enjoyed "The Night The Snow Spilled Blood" and "The Carrier of the Serpent." I couldn't be more pleased with EERIE #38.

MYRON ERSTENIUK
Stamford, Conn.

You guys must really be sick to keep publishing all those praiseworthy letters. I'm really disgusted by all this stuff about, "Oh, I think your comic is the utmost grooviest!" I'd rather hear a little constructive criticism anyday. Personally though, I like EERIE.

GREGORY A. BILLMAN
McGrath, Alaska

Hey, EERIE, I want you to know that the only reason I picked up EERIE #38 was "Stake in the Game." I really groove on vampire stories and this was one of the best yet.

LARRIE KING
Sharpsville, Pa.



A haunting pair of eyes by Esteban Maroto from "A Stranger in Hell" in EERIE #38. Of the story, T. Casey Brennan explains, "There's probably not a religion on earth that doesn't view this world as a 'testing ground' for man. It is a very tangible Hell, if you will, where mortal man must strive for immortal perfection. A stranger, then, has no name, because he represents every man. He is you!"

Well, here we go again. I know you won't print this because it's a serious complaint but the Warren magazines are sinking practically to the bottom of the barrel. EERIE, Creepy and Vampirella use unknown artists and writers and print only praiseworthy letters. The art's really starting to lag. Please, your magazines deserve the best. Don't let us down. Thank you.

DAN MORRIS
Euclid, Ohio

Any number of angry letters were received this issue in response to a letter from reader J. W. Zabel which appeared in EERIE #37. Zabel wrote that most readers buy EERIE for the art and not the story. Said Zabel, "Do your writers really believe we buy your books for the writing in them?" Below, another letter from J. W. Zabel:

First of all, thanks for printing one of my letters. Must say that I really enjoyed Loper Espi's draftsmanship on the EERIE Fanfare pages of EERIE #38. Not only was it the best artwork I've seen in years, but the concept, a human being crawling on the ground like a lizard, really fascinated me. Finally, I'd like to make my preferences known. I like the work of T. Casey Brennan and Don McGregor. As for artists, Tom Sutton leads as usual. I also like Jerry Grandenetti's work but I feel his filling up every bit of space with detail is getting to be a strain on the eyes. Maroto's work is pretty good but could be far better if he did not use special textures and techniques. Artists should try and stick to the simple yet effective techniques of Sutton and Grandenetti.

J. W. ZABEL
Youngstown, Ohio

I'm writing you because I've just read EERIE #38. The cover was neat—"Stake in the Game" was pretty good and therefore rates a B. "The Carrier of the Serpent" was groovy and deserves an A. "A Stranger in Hell" was fair and rates a C. "The Night The Snow Spilled Blood" was an A.

JUAN BORRAS
Miami, Fla.

I was really shocked when I discovered how good the latest EERIE was. Keep it up!

DAVID EICHINGER
North Plainfield, N.J.

**WRITER DONALD
MCGREGOR ON
"THE NIGHT THE
SNOW SPILLED
BLOOD" PAGE 55**

After reading the latest EERIE, #38, I found myself drawn to paper and pen, forced to write this missive (I always wanted to write that word in a letter). What I found between the covers of EERIE #38 was the best writing I've seen since I started reading EERIE. Douglas Moench's story "Stake in the Game" was very fine. The characters were a delight to see. Please don't cut stories in half like you did with this one. I see no reason to turn EERIE into a newspaper by continuing a story in the back pages. "The Carrier of the Serpent" was sheer delight all the way. "The Night The Snow Spilled Blood" was handled in a run-of-the-mill way. The only thing good about it was Tom Sutton's artwork. As for more Science Fiction in EERIE, I say yes. Many thanks for a fine magazine.

JASON ARGO
Bethany, Conn.

I really liked "Horror at Hamilton House" in EERIE #37 because I like werewolves and other monsters. Do you?

JEFF STRONG
Muncie, Ind.



Yeah. They're lots of fun at parties and get-togethers.

Why don't you and Uncle Creepy stop fighting? Society has enough violence. Tell Uncle you apologize. Okay?

RICHARD MORGANA
Flushing, N.Y.



Apologize for what? For gagging at his body odor?

Cut down on Science Fiction in EERIE! It's boring. This is a horror magazine, the greatest one around. Let's keep it that way. We want more werewolves, ghosts, ghouls and goblins.

BYRCH GRIFFIN
Kannapolis, N.C.

Well, Cuz EERIE, all I have to say about your magazine is "Bleech!" EERIE is the worst rag I've ever read! Creepy and Vampirella are the greatest. I'll never read EERIE again. Keep your old junk, jelly-belly.

STEVE ELLIOTT
Stuttgart, Ark.

You have nothing to worry about, EERIE. Your magazine is a thousand times better than Uncle Creepy's. One improvement could be made though. More monsters! Really liked "A Rush of Wings" in EERIE #37. The art was great!

GLEN BODENHAUSEN
Bellevue, Neb.

I'm an old fan who's been out of circulation for some time. Just ran across a copy of EERIE #38 and it's beautiful! Enjoyed the Warren Awards story and "Stake in the Game."

ALVIN SMITH
McGuire A.F.B., N.J.

**EERIE'S DYING
TO HEAR FROM
YOU! WRITE!**

DEAR COUSIN EERIE

c/o Warren Publishing
145 East 32nd Street
New York, N.Y. 10016

MARY
SHELLEY WAS A
GOOD STORY
TELLER BUT
LET'S HEAR IT
FROM THE
HORSES MOUTH
HIMSELF...

LONDON: 1845... AT THE HOME OF LADY HARCOURT, AN
EVENING'S ENTERTAINMENT IS ENJOYED BY THE MORE WELL-TO-DO
OF THE CITY... THE RICH AND THE FAMOUS OFTEN GATHER HERE TO
DISCUSS THEIR LATEST ADVENTURES... ON THIS PARTICULAR
EVENING, EVERYONE'S ATTENTION IS TURNED TOWARDS A
BRILLIANT YOUNG SURGEON, NEWLY ARRIVED IN ENGLAND FROM
THE CONTINENT... HIS NAME... CHRISTIAN FRANKENSTEIN...

IT WAS GOOD OF
YOU TO COME TO
OUR LITTLE PARTY,
DR. FRANKENSTEIN.
WE'VE HEARD SO
MUCH ABOUT YOU
AND YOUR MARVEL-
LOUS WORK AT THE
HOSPITAL!

THANK YOU, LADY
HARCOURT. BEING
UNFAMILIAR WITH
YOUR COUNTRY, I
WELCOMED THE
OPPORTUNITY
TO MAKE NEW
FRIENDS...

THE BRAIN OF FRANKENSTEIN

MIKE
PLOOG

OUTSIDE A STORM SUDDENLY WELLS UP...

AT THIS HOUR, DOCTOR, WE
USUALLY RELATE GHOSTLY
STORIES TO AMUSE OUR-
SELVES... THE STORM PRESENTS
A PERFECT SETTING...
PERHAPS YOU WOULD
DO US THE
HONOR?

WHAT SORT OF STORY
WOULD YOU LIKE TO
HEAR, LADY
HARCOURT?

KRAK

WE HAVE HEARD OF MARY SHELLEY'S TALE ABOUT
YOUR FATHER, BARON VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN...
IT WAS MOST AMUSING! PERHAPS YOU CAN
ADD TO THE STORY?



MARY SHELLEY DID INDEED INVENT HER STORY FROM LEGENDS WOVEN AROUND MY FATHER'S EXPERIMENTS... IF YOU WILL ALLOW ME, I WILL TRY MY BEST TO AMUSE YOUR GUESTS WITH EVENTS LEFT UNTOLD BY MISS SHELLEY'S BOOK...



AS YOU ALL KNOW, MY FATHER WAS A GENIUS WHO PRIED INTO THE SECRETS OF LIFE AND DEATH. HIS RESEARCHES LEFT HIM TO CREATE A **LIVING CREATURE**... A PATCH WORK CREATION MADE UP OF BITS AND PIECES TAKEN FROM VARIOUS CADAVERS. THIS MUCH IS TOLD IN MARY SHELLEY'S BOOK.



...BUT MISS SHELLEY MERELY RECOUNTED THE **LEGEND**, NOT THE FACTS... IN REALITY, MY FATHER WAS **MURDERED** BY HIS OWN CREATION!



...THE MONSTER THEN FLED INTO THE FOREST. SOON AFTER, IT DIED, ITS BRAIN SEVERELY DAMAGED...



HERE, LADY HARCOURT, I BEGIN MY OWN TALE OF MYSTERY AND HORROR...

PLEASE CONTINUE, DR. FRANKENSTEIN! I FIND IT ALL MOST INTERESTING!



MY STORY BEGINS IN A CEMETERY IN BAVARIA... A YOUNG PEASANT, DEAD FROM A HUNTING ACCIDENT, WAS ABOUT TO BE LAID TO REST...



WAIT...PLEASE...BEFORE
MY SON IS TAKEN AWAY
FROM ME FOREVER...LET ME
LOOK UPON HIS FACE FOR
THE LAST TIME!



...THE COFFIN LID WAS LAID BACK AND...

DEAR
GOD!

HEADLESS!



MEANWHILE, AT THE LOCAL HOSPITAL WHERE I
PRACTICED MY SURGERY...

HANS KEMMER! YOU YOUNG
RASCAL! I HAVEN'T SEEN
YOU SINCE OUR STUDENT
DAYS AT THE
UNIVERSITY!

I AM NOW A DOCTOR
LIKE YOURSELF!
I AM HERE LOOKING
FOR A PLACE TO
STAY...IT IS GOOD
TO SEE YOU, OLD
FRIEND.



COME WITH ME, THEN! YOU CAN
SETTLE IN AT MY HOME. WE
HAVE A LOT TO TALK ABOUT,
YOU AND I! ... WE'LL TAKE
A COACH...



THAT EVENING, AT MY CASTLE...

IT HAS BEEN MOST ENJOYABLE
DISCUSSING THE GOOD TIMES WE
HAD TOGETHER, CHRISTIAN. BUT YOU
MENTIONED THAT YOU ARE CARRYING
OUT SOME "PRIVATE RESEARCH"
I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MORE!

GOOD! I WAS HOPING YOU
WOULD! I NEED YOUR HELP,
HANS. BUT BEFORE I CAN
EXPLAIN, I WILL HAVE TO
SHOW YOU. DOWNSTAIRS,
IN THE CELLAR, THERE
IS A LABORATORY...



BUT BEFORE I COULD SAY ANY MORE, THERE
WAS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR...

SO IT'S YOU! YOU'RE
LATE! HAVE YOU
BROUGHT THE
SPECIMEN?

YES, DOCTOR
...ALL NICE
AND FRESH!



HANS FOLLOWED ME OUT TO THE CORRIDOR...

HERE YOU ARE, DOCTOR... JUST AS YOU REQUESTED! HE USED TO BE A PEASANT IN THE VILLAGE... KILLED IN A HUNTING ACCIDENT.

EXCELLENT! IT'S IN PERFECT CONDITION!

CHRISTIAN! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

WITH THIS FRESH HEAD, HANS, I CAN AT LAST COMPLETE THE RESEARCH I MENTIONED... HAVE PATIENCE, AND YOU WILL SOON BE AN ENTHUSIASTIC PARTNER IN THIS VENTURE, I PROMISE YOU!

VERY WELL, CHRISTIAN. I AM EAGER TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU'RE UP TO!

AFTER I HAD PAID MY SINISTER VISITOR AND SENT HIM ON HIS WAY, I LED HANS DOWN THE WINDING STAIRS TO MY LABORATORY...

CHRISTIAN, DOES THIS RESEARCH OF YOURS HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH YOUR LATE FATHER'S WORK? THIS SEVERED HEAD...

YES, HANS... I TOO AM EXPLORING THE SECRETS OF LIFE AND DEATH! BUT UNLIKE MY FATHER I AM DRIVEN BY MORE THAN CURIOSITY!

THIS IS WHERE I WORK, HANS...

IT'S INCREDIBLE! A FULLY EQUIPPED LABORATORY!

BUT YOU HAVE YET TO SEE THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF MY WORK... THE REASON FOR MY EXPERIMENTS IN REVIVING THE DEAD. HERE, IN THIS TANK... KEPT ALIVE BY A STEADY FLOW OF ELECTRICAL IMPULSES...

...THE BRAIN OF MY FATHER, VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN!!

THIS IS ASTOUNDING, CHRISTIAN! BUT HOW...??

A black and white illustration of a man in a trench coat and hat running away from a building. The building has a sign that reads "HOTEL SINGAPORE". The man is running towards the right, away from the building. The illustration is done in a sketchy, expressive style with heavy shadows.

LET ME GET THIS
STRAIGHT, DR. KEMMER...
YOU SAY THAT YOU'LL
PAY ME TEN MARKS
TO **MURDER** DR.
FRANKENSTEIN??...
I'LL DO IT! BUT
I'M CURIOUS TO
KNOW YOUR
REASON...

[illegible]



MY FATHER, CRAZED AND FRIGHTENED BY HIS HORRIBLE ORDEAL, BROKE FREE FROM THE APPARATUS, AND I WAS FORCED TO INJECT HIM WITH A SEDATIVE...



HANS AND I CARRIED MY FATHER TO A VACANT ROOM, WHERE WE CLOTHED HIM AND LEFT HIM TO REST...

HE'S ALIVE, HANS! WE MUST GIVE HIM TIME TO ADJUST TO HIS NEW BODY. WE SHALL TALK TO HIM IN THE MORNING, AFTER THE SEDATIVE HAS WORN OFF...



I THEN RETURNED TO MY ROOM, AND HANS TO HIS THERE, HE CONTINUED TO PURSUE THE FIENDISH PLAN I KNEW NOTHING ABOUT...



I WAS SOON AWAKENED IN MY ROOM BY AN UNGODLY SCREAM...



PULLING ON MY CLOTHES, I RUSHED TO MY FATHER'S ROOM WHERE I FOUND HANS...

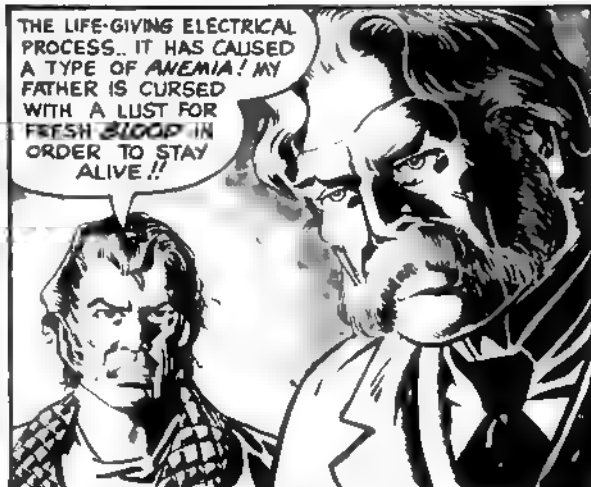
HANS! WHAT HAS HAPPENED HERE? WHERE IS MY FATHER?

I DON'T KNOW, CHRISTIAN! HE HAS ESCAPED HE... HE KILLED THIS MAN!!



IT'S THE GRAVEROBBER WHO SOLD ME THAT SEVERED HEAD! GOOD LORD! HE'S BEEN DRAINED OF HIS BLOOD!! I WAS AFRAID OF THIS!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, CHRISTIAN?



THE LIFE-GIVING ELECTRICAL PROCESS... IT HAS CAUSED A TYPE OF ANEMIA! MY FATHER IS CURSED WITH A LUST FOR FRESH BLOOD IN ORDER TO STAY ALIVE!!



I AM VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN... YET THIS IS NOT MY FACE! ...NOW I REMEMBER... THE LABORATORY... MY SON... THE EXPERIMENT WE PLANNED BEFORE MY DEATH! YES, I HAVE COME BACK FROM THE GRAVE... BUT... WHAT IS THIS TERRIBLE CRAVING I FEEL??



DRIVEN BY A STRANGE IMPULSE, MY FATHER WANDERED INTO THE VILLAGE, AND CAME TO A FAMILIAR HOUSE...

THE HOME OF DR WIRTZMANN... THE MAN WHO ONCE RIDICULED MY EXPERIMENTS AND BROUGHT DISGRACE TO THE NAME OF FRANKENSTEIN...



WHA-!?? WHO ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

DON'T YOU REMEMBER ME, DR WIRTZMANN? ...BUT OF COURSE NOT! HOW COULD YOU RECOGNIZE A DEAD MAN! I SEEK REVENGE, DR. WIRTZMANN! REVENGE, IN THE NAME OF FRANKENSTEIN!!



WITH A LEAP, MY FATHER WAS UPON THE FRIGHTENED MAN...

NO!!

THE FOLLOWING MORNING, I WAS SUMMONED TO DR WIRTZMANN'S HOME TO DETERMINE THE CAUSE OF DEATH HANS ACCOMPANIED ME...

DR. WIRTZMANN OBVIOUSLY DIED FROM A CRUSHED SKULL AND A SEVERE LOSS OF BLOOD. I WOULD SAY IT IS A CLEAR CASE OF MURDER.

I AGREE, DR. FRANKENSTEIN. IT IS A VERY STRANGE CASE... VERY STRANGE INDEED! THE MAN SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN *DRAINED* OF EVERY DROP OF HIS BLOOD!



MEANWHILE, DEEP IN THE FOREST...

THE ENTIRE VILLAGE WILL BE LOOKING FOR ME NOW... HOW CAN I ESCAPE THIS HORRIBLE CURSE? I AM A *MONSTER*, MORE TERRIBLE THAN THE FIEND I MYSELF ONCE CREATED! MUST REACH MY SON...



BACK AT THE VILLAGE, THE TOWNS-PEOPLE HAD HEARD OF THE BRUTAL MURDER OF DR. WIRTZMANN. THEY STORMED POLICE HEADQUARTERS, DEMANDING ACTION...

WHAT DO THE POLICE INTEND TO DO ABOUT THIS OUTRAGE?

WE WANT THE KILLER BROUGHT TO JUSTICE!!

CALM DOWN! BE REASONABLE! WE ARE DOING ALL WE CAN! SEARCH PARTIES ARE BEING FORMED TO COMB THE COUNTRYSIDE!



HANS AND I RETURNED TO THE CASTLE...

I WILL GO DIRECTLY TO THE LABORATORY AND BEGIN FURTHER RESEARCH. YOU, HANS, MUST TAKE MY HORSE AND RIDE INTO THE FOREST. I KNOW MY FATHER IS HIDING THERE... TRY AND FIND HIM!

I WILL DO MY BEST, CHRISTIAN!

LITTLE DOES HE REALIZE THE HATRED I FEEL FOR VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN!

CHRISTIAN IS SUCH A FOOL! FIRST I WILL FIND HIS FATHER... AND SHOOT HIM! THEN I'LL RETURN TO THE CASTLE AND FINISH WHAT I SET OUT TO DO!

THEN...

WAIT... YOU WERE WITH MY SON IN THE LABORATORY! HELP ME!

SO, VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN... YOU BEG FOR MERCY! NOW I HANS KEMMER, SHALL HAVE MY REVENGE!





IN THE NAME OF
MY PARENTS...
KILLED BY YOUR
CREATION, VICTOR
FRANKENSTEIN...
TAKE THIS...!!



LATER... AND SO,
CHRISTIAN
THERE WAS NO
SIGN OF YOUR FATHER.
I SEARCHED EVERY-
WHERE I COULDN'T
FIND HIM.

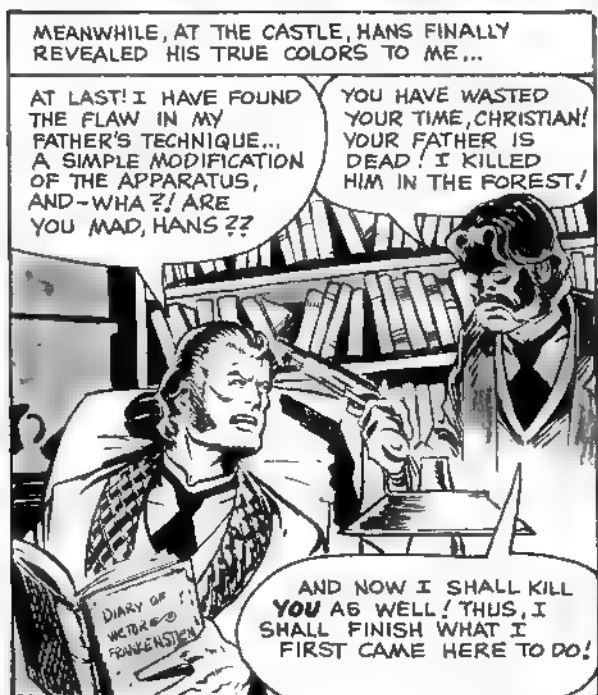
WE MUST NOT GIVE UP,
HANS! I AM SO
CLOSE TO SOLVING
THE ANEMIA FACTOR!
SOON I WILL BE
ABLE TO SAVE
MY FATHER!



THAT NIGHT, IN THE FOREST, A PITIFUL
CREATURE STUMBLED THROUGH THE
DARKNESS WITH HANS' BULLET
LODGED IN HIS SHOULDER...

GROWING WEAKER...THE PAIN
...WHAT'S THAT?? ...TORCHES!!
THE VILLAGERS ARE SEARCHING
FOR ME... MUST ESCAPE! BACK
TO THE CASTLE...
SOMEHOW...

THIS WAY, MEN...
WERE ON HIS
TRAIL!



MEANWHILE, AT THE CASTLE, HANS FINALLY
REVEALED HIS TRUE COLORS TO ME...

AT LAST! I HAVE FOUND
THE FLAW IN MY
FATHER'S TECHNIQUE...
A SIMPLE MODIFICATION
OF THE APPARATUS,
AND-WHA?! ARE
YOU MAD, HANS??

YOU HAVE WASTED
YOUR TIME, CHRISTIAN!
YOUR FATHER IS
DEAD! I KILLED
HIM IN THE FOREST!

AND NOW I SHALL KILL
YOU AS WELL! THUS, I
SHALL FINISH WHAT I
FIRST CAME HERE TO DO!

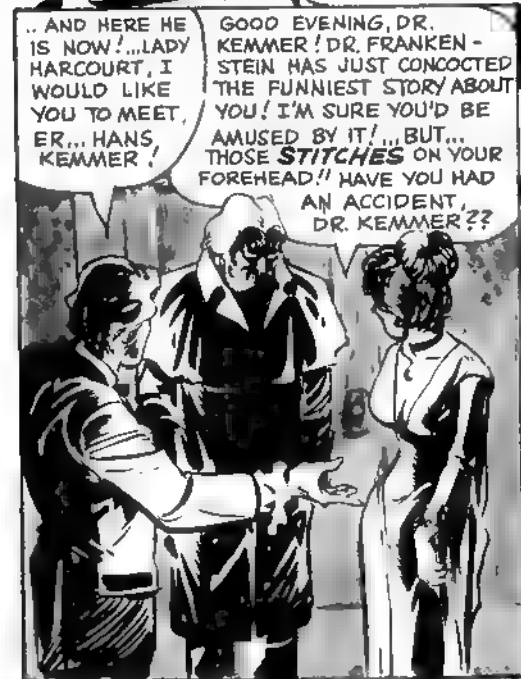


BUT SUDDENLY...

I SHOULD KILL YOU,
HANS KEMMER... BUT
I HAVE A MUCH
BETTER PLAN
FOR YOU!

CRACK

MMMPH!





JUST A MINUTE!

PRINCE TARGO! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? ON THE SURFACE?

WOW! YOU LOOK LIKE A FISH OUT OF WATER!

NO WISECRACKS, JOHN--PLEASE!

I AM! I SPENT THE NIGHT IN A PRETTY BAD PART OF TOWN!

LISTEN-- I NEED YOUR HELP! I WANT TO ASK A BIG FAVOR!

ASK AWAY! I OWE YOU QUITE A BIT! WHATEVER YOU WANT, IF I'VE GOT IT, IT'S YOURS! YOU KNOW THAT!

I'D LIKE TO MAKE USE OF IT! WITH YOU PILOTING, OF COURSE!

I'LL EXPLAIN IT TO YOU *ON THE WAY!* IF IT'S ALL RIGHT WITH YOU, I'D LIKE TO DEPART *IMMEDIATELY!*

DO YOU STILL HAVE THAT SUB-MARINE? THE ONE YOU USE TO GATHER MARINE SPECIMEN?

SURE!

AND WE'D BETTER BRING ALONG ONE OF YOUR FROGMEN SUITS, TOO!

HEY! WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT ANYWAY?

SURE!

IT STILL EXISTS-- THERE, ON THE OCEAN FLOOR-- THE CONTINENT OF ATLANTIS... AND UPON THIS CONTINENT, THERE STANDS THE HUGE, GLEAMING PALACE OF THE KINGDOM OF MANAH. YOU KNOW WELL THAT THIS KINGDOM EXISTS... FOR YOU ARE PRINCE TARGO, THE SON OF THE MIGHTY KING OF THIS PROUD LAND...

THE ONCE POWERFUL PRINCE



IN OUR LAST RECORDED ATLANTIAN ADVENTURE, (EERIE #37) PRINCE TARGO WAS TRANSFORMED INTO A GIANT CREATURE INTENT ON DESTROYING ALL OF MANAH. THAT STORY IS STILL UNRESOLVED. YET, MUCH OF THE YOUTHFUL PRINCE'S PAST REMAINS UNREVEALED. THIS, THEN, IS A PREVIOUSLY UNTOLD TALE, CHRONICLING A PAST EXPLOIT OF TARGO, THE PRINCE OF MANAH.

YOUR
HIGHNESS!
A STRANGE
SHIP
APPROACHES!

YES, MY QUEEN! IT IS WHAT
SURFACEMEN TERM A **SUBMARINE!**
I HAVE ALREADY COMMANDED OUR
WARRIORS TO BE PREPARED FOR
THE WORST!

IF THIS IS AN ATTACK,
WE ARE READY! WE MAY NOT
HAVE THE SOPHISTICATED
WEAPONS THE SURFACE
PEOPLE POSSESS BUT
WE ARE MANY!

FATHER...

WHA-?
TARGO'S
VOICE--
COMING
FROM THE
SHIP!

WHY SHOULD HE
BE ABOARD SUCH A
VESSEL? THIS IS
MOST STRANGE!

WHA-? YOU'RE
THE FROGMAN?

BUT... I
DON'T
GET IT!

IT'S EASILY
EXPLAINED! I'VE
LOST MY ENCHANTED
RING--THE RING THAT
ALLOWS ME TO BREATHE
THE WATERS AND GIVES
ME MY SACRED POWERS!
OR RATHER IT'S BEEN
STOLEN!

I THINK I
KNOW WHO STOLE
IT... AND HOW I CAN
GET IT BACK!

BUT BEFORE I
CAN DO SO, I'VE GOT
TO SEE FATHER! I
NEED HIS HELP!

FATHER, A FROGMAN WILL BE LEAVING
THIS SHIP *ANY MINUTE NOW!* PLEASE
ALLOW HIM TO ENTER THE KINGDOM--
HE MEANS US NO HARM!

YOU MUST MEET HIM
WHEN HE ENTERS AND
TAKE HIM TO THE ROYAL
CHAMBERS--TALK TO
HIM *THERE!*

THIS SUIT WILL SERVE A DOUBLE
PURPOSE! FIRST, IT'LL ALLOW ME TO
BREATHE UNDERWATER!

AND SECONDLY, IT'LL
MAKE IT SO MY PEOPLE
DON'T *RECOGNIZE*
ME! I DO NOT WISH
THEM TO *KNOW* THAT
I HAVE LOST THE
SACRED RING GIVEN ME
BY MY FATHER. THAT
WOULD ONLY CAUSE
FATHER GREAT
EMBARRASSMENT!

THIS IS THE RING...THE RING THAT ONCE WAS YOURS.
IT ALLOWED YOU TO BREATHE THE WATERS OF THE
SEA. IT ALLOWED YOU TO PROJECT STRANGE ULTRA-
SONIC COMMANDS AND TO DOMINATE
THE CREATURES OF THE SEA. IT IS
SAID THAT THIS RING WAS GIVEN
UNTO YOUR PEOPLE BY POSEIDON
HIMSELF.



THIS IS THE CHAMBER MY SON TOLD YOU ABOUT!

NOW, SIR, WOULD YOU MIND TELLING M-- WHAT--?

TARGO!
IT IS YOU!

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS?

I HAD TO HAVE YOU BRING ME TO THIS AIR-FILLED ROOM, BEFORE I COULD SPEAK TO YOU

I CAN NO LONGER BREATHE THE *WATERS*! MY RING HAS BEEN *STOLEN*!

WHAT??

BUT, I *KNOW* WHO STOLE IT, AND I *KNOW* I CAN GET IT BACK!

BUT TO DO SO, I MUST HAVE *ANOTHER RING*-- TO ALLOW ME TO BREATHE BENEATH THE SEA!

VERY WELL, MY SON! THERE ARE *MANY* SUCH RINGS HERE...

...BUT NONE AS POWERFUL AS YOUR RING! EVEN MY RING IS NOT AS POWERFUL!

I BEGIN TO THINK THAT I SHOULD *NOT* HAVE GIVEN THE RING UNTO YOU!

DO NOT WORRY, FATHER! THE RING IS NOT LOST!



IT SHALL BE *MINE* AGAIN! I ASSURE YOU!

VERY WELL! BUT I HAVE WARNED YOU THAT YOUR MANY TRIPS TO THE SURFACE WORLD WERE *UNWISE*...




...AND IT WOULD SEEM THAT YOU HAVE PROVED WHAT I HAVE SAID TO BE *TRUE*!

STILL, I SHALL SEND A COURIER FOR A RING... AND I SHALL *WISH* YOU WELL!



THINK BACK NOW... REMEMBER THE GIRL YOU MET UPON THE SURFACE... REMEMBER THE MANY DRINKS THE TWO OF YOU HAD... REMEMBER THE SHOCK WHEN YOU AWOKE TO FIND BOTH THE GIRL AND YOUR RING GONE...




NOW, YOU STREAK THROUGH THE SEA SWIMMING AWAY FROM THE GREAT KINGDOM OF MANAII. YOU ARE AT LAST RELIEVED TO FEEL ONCE AGAIN THE COOL RUSH OF WATER AS IT ENTERS YOUR LUNGS!

NOW I AM AGAIN THE **SEA PRINCE!** SHOULD BE ABLE TO HANDLE THAT THIEF **WITHOUT ANY TROUBLE!**



IT HAS BEEN NEARLY A **WEEK** SINCE I LAST VISITED MY HOME KINGDOM! AND NEARLY A WEEK SINCE **MY RING** WAS STOLEN!

BUT NOW, AT LAST, I BELIEVE I KNOW WHO POSSESSES IT! I HAVE READ OF MANY RECENT ACTS OF **MODERN-DAY PIRACY!**




ARRIVING AT A COASTAL CITY, YOU CHECK THROUGH ALL THE LOCAL PAPERS, UNTIL...

AH... **HERE'S** WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR! AN ACCOUNT OF ALL THE RECENT ACTS OF PIRACY!



THEY SEEMED TO HAVE OCCURRED APPROXIMATELY **EVERY OTHER DAY!**


THAT MEANS HE MAY WELL STRIKE AGAIN **TODAY!**



THEY WEREN'T COMMITTED IN THE **SAME PLACE!** SPREAD PRETTY FAR APART!

GONNA BE RATHER **HARD**, STAKING OUT THAT **WHOLE AREA!** BUT I'LL GIVE IT A **TRY!**

WHO KNOWS? MAYBE I'LL GET **LUCKY**, AND CATCH SIGHT OF HIM **RIGHT OFF!**



BUT I'D BETTER GET STARTED **IMMEDIATELY!** THE CREEP COULD BE MAKING HIS MOVE **RIGHT NOW!**

AND, AT A CERTAIN HOME
BY THE SEA ...

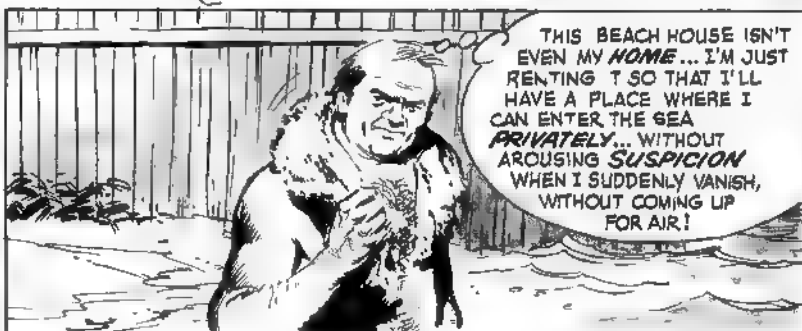
THAT MAN NEXT
DOOR, SURE IS A
STRANGE ONE! DOESN'T
SEEM TO HAVE ANY **FRIENDS**!
ALL HE DOES IS SIT AROUND
THE HOUSE, AND GO OUT FOR
LONG SWIMS ALONE!

QUIET,
MARTHA! HE
MIGHT **HEAR**
YOU!

YEAH,
I **HEARD**
HER, ALL RIGHT!

AND SHE'S **DEAD**
WRONG... ABOUT
EVERYTHING!

I DO **MORE**
THAN SIT AROUND
THE HOUSE --
MUCH MORE!



AND MY **FRIENDS** ARE THE CREATURES OF THE
SEA! THEY MAKE **MUCH** BETTER FRIENDS THAN PEOPLE!
THEY'LL DO **ANYTHING** I TELL THEM!

SO THERE, YOU
NOSEY, BUSY-BODY
BATTLE-AX!



THE PEOPLE OF THIS WORLD
ARE INDEED **STUPID!**

THEY REFUSE TO
BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE
EXIST UPON THE **OCEAN
FLOOR**... NOR DO THEY
BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE
ENCHANTED RINGS THAT
CAN ALLOW ONE TO
BREATHE SEA WATER...AND
GIVE HIM MANY **MORE**
POWERS AS WELL!

WHEN THAT GIRL BROUGHT ME THE RING, SHE
THOUGHT IT WAS ONLY **VALUABLE!**
SHE DID NOT REALIZE IT WAS
POWERFUL AS WELL!

FOR **MANY YEARS**,
EVER SINCE I MET **PRINCE
TARGO**, I HAVE TRIED TO
CONVINCE PEOPLE THAT
THE KINGDOM OF MANAI
EXISTS, BUT THEY WOULD
NOT **LISTEN** TO ME!

NOW, I GUESS IT IS **JUST AS
WELL** THAT THEY DIDN'T
BELIEVE ME!

NOW THE FOOLS
WILL **NEVER KNOW**
HOW I OBTAINED
MY FANTASTIC
POWERS -- NEVER
REALIZE THAT
THEY COME FROM
THIS RING!

FOR AWHILE, HE COUNTS HIS TAKE...LOOKS
OVER HIS STOLEN MERCHANDISE...BUT
THERE IS NO REAL PLEASURE IN THAT...

THE ONLY TRUE PLEASURE IS
IN OBTAINING MORE...

NOW, MY
FRIENDS! THE
TIME HAS
COME!

AND SHORTLY, OUT AT SEA...

GODD GOD!
LOOK AT THAT!
AM I **SEEING**
THINGS??



A MAN RIDING A GIANT **BULL WHALE** --- HEADING FOR *THAT SHIP*! THAT HAS TO BE THE GUY I'M AFTER!

IN FACT, I BELIEVE I **RECOGNIZE** HIM!

BETTER, **DUCK DOWN** OUT OF SIGHT! DOUBT THAT HE'LL **SPOT** ME--HE'S GOT HIS ATTENTION RIVETED ON THE **SHIP**! STILL, I DON'T WANT TO **CHANCE** IT!



I FIGURED, IF I CIRCLED THIS **WHOLE AREA OVER AND OVER**, AS **QUICKLY** AS I COULD, THERE WAS A **CHANCE** I MIGHT BUMP INTO HIM!

BUT I NEVER THOUGHT I'D GET **THIS LUCKY**! DIDN'T HAVE TO MAKE MORE THAN **ONE REVOLUTION**!

DOESN'T TAKE MUCH TO FIGURE WHAT THIS GUY'S **PLANNING**! HE'S GOING TO **RAM** THE SHIP **SINK** IT... THEN PICK UP HIS LOOT AFTER IT'S SUNK!

THAT'S WHY THE SURFACE WORLD'S **COAST GUARD** HAS HAD SO MUCH TROUBLE CATCHING UP WITH THIS GUY! THE WHOLE THING HAPPENS TOO **QUICKLY**!



THE **COAST GUARD** HAS HAD **OTHER** PROBLEMS, TOO! THEY WEREN'T EVEN SURE WHAT WAS **RESPONSIBLE**! **SOME** OF THE SURVIVORS OF PREVIOUS **RAMMINGS** THOUGHT IT WAS A SHIP THAT **RAMMED** THEM!

MUST HAVE HAPPENED SO **QUICKLY** THEY MISTOOK THE **WHALE** FOR A **VESSEL**!

OKAY, SO I FOUND HIM! BUT **NOW** WHAT?

GOT TO GET **OVER** THERE AND FIND SOME WAY TO **STOP** HIM, BEFORE HE **SINKS** THAT SHIP... AND **GETS AWAY** FROM ME!



WAIT! HE'S MOMENTARILY **STOPPED** MOVING, IN ORDER TO STUDY THE SHIP!

THIS **COULD** BE JUST THE CHANCE I NEED!



NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS GET **OVER** THERE **BEFORE** HE DECIDES TO GET MOVING AGAIN!



MADE IT!



THAT'S ONE THING IN MY FAVOR! I COMPLETELY **UNDERSTAND** THE POWERS MY OPPONENT POSSESSES!



I KNOW THAT WHEN A WHALE IS COMMANDED TO REMAIN STILL, IT WILL NOT EVEN **FLICK ITS TAIL** IF IT FEELS SOMETHING ON IT!



NOW, MY FRIENDS! WE HAVE **SAVORED** THE SIGHT LONG ENOUGH! NOW WE WILL MAKE THE SHIP **OURS!**

HUNH?

TARGO!

WHO'RE YOU TALKING TO? THE **WHALE?** OR SOME **LITTLE GREEN MEN?**

SURE! I **RECOGNIZE** YOU! I MET YOU IN A **BAR** ONCE!

BUT THAT WAS QUITE A NUMBER OF **YEARS** AGO!

YOU ARE A **FOOL, TARGO!** I AM **MUCH MORE POWERFUL** THAN YOU! I POSSESS **YOUR RING!** I HAVE THE POWER TO **COMMAND THE FISH!** I COULD HAVE THEM--

OH **NO** YOU CAN'T!...

NOT WHILE YOU'RE **ENGAGED IN FISTICUFFS!**

IT TAKES **FULL CONCENTRATION** TO USE THE **RING!** AND YOU'VE ALREADY GOT YOUR **HANDS FULL!**



IS *THAT* ALL IT TAKES TO FINISH
YOUR CRIMINAL CAREER?

YOU'D BETTER SLIP
THAT *RING* OFF! AND
HAND IT *HERE!* THEN
GET ON YOUR *FEET*,
FRIEND! IT'S--



HEY! WAIT
A MINUTE! HE *HASN'T*
GIVEN UP! HE'S
CONCENTRATING-- GIVING
A COMMAND TO--



YEOWP!

WITH A SENSES-SHATTERING
SPLASH, YOU HIT THE WATER...



SLAPSH!

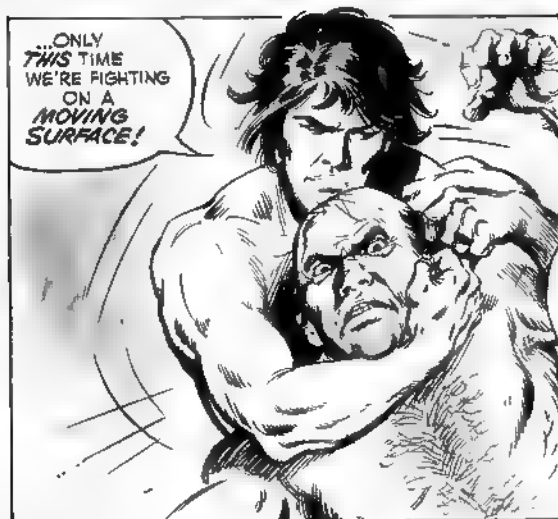
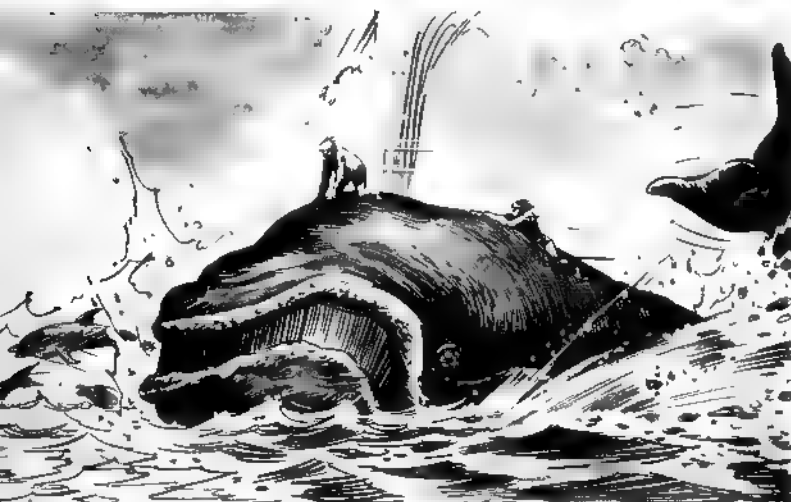
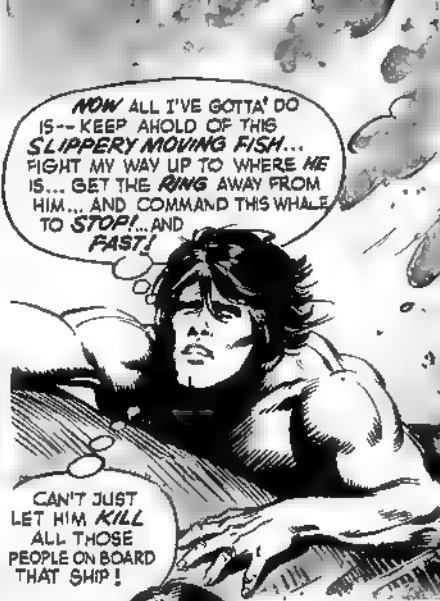
ALMOST *ASKED* FOR THAT ONE! LEFT
MYSELF *WIDE OPEN*, STANDING *RIGHT*
OVER THIS WHALE'S BLOW-HOLE...



BUT THIS IS
HARDLY THE TIME
TO *CHW* MYSELF
OUT...

GOTTA GET
BACK ON THAT
WHALE -- FAST!

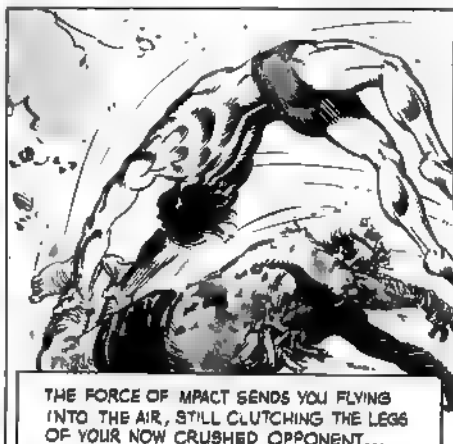








BUT THERE IS NO COMMAND...



THE FORCE OF IMPACT SENDS YOU FLYING INTO THE AIR, STILL CLUTCHING THE LEGS OF YOUR NOW CRUSHED OPPONENT...



THEN, THERE IS DARKNESS...
AND WHEN YOU AWAKE...

I... I'M
ON THE
OCEAN
FLOOR!

LOOKS LIKE
I *SOMEHOW*
MANAGED TO KEEP
HOLD OF MY ADVERSARY!
THANK GOD!



SURE IS A *GRISLY MESS!*

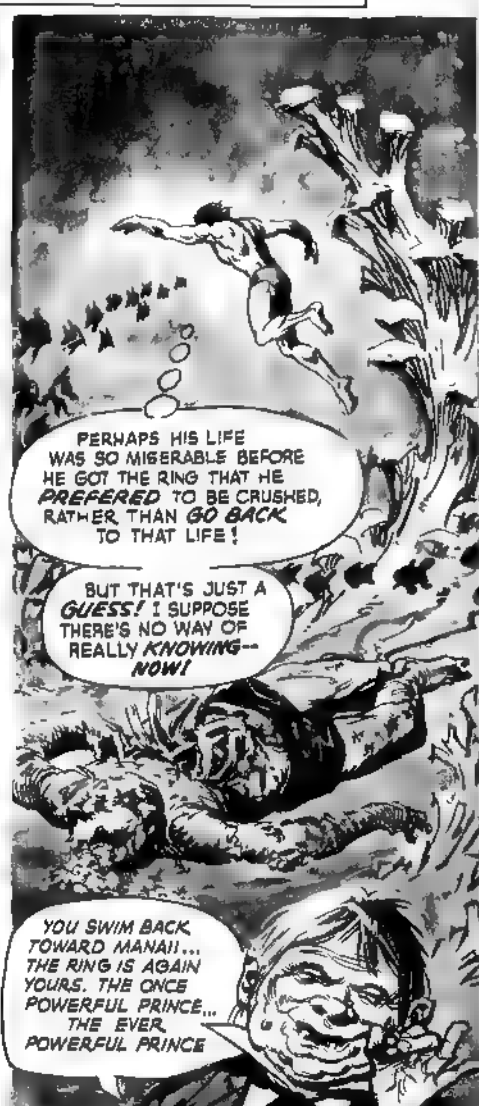
BUT, AT LEAST, HIS *HAND* STAYED
WITH HIM... THE ONE WITH THE
RING ON IT!

NOW I HAVE
ALL THE TIME
IN THE WORLD
TO GET IT
OFF
HIM!



WHA-? COMES OFF WITHOUT
ANY TROUBLE! I WONDER...
COULD IT HAVE BEEN HIS
WILL THAT PREVENTED ME
FROM GETTING IT OFF
BEFORE! HE WANTED SO
MUCH NOT TO *LOSE* IT!

MAYBE *THAT* EXPLAINS
WHY HE DIDN'T GIVE
THE *COMMAND!*



PERHAPS HIS LIFE
WAS SO MISERABLE BEFORE
HE GOT THE RING THAT HE
PREFERRED TO BE CRUSHED,
RATHER THAN *GO BACK*
TO THAT LIFE!

BUT THAT'S JUST A
GUESS! I SUPPOSE
THERE'S NO WAY OF
REALLY *KNOWING--*
NOW!

YOU SWIM BACK
TOWARD MANAH...
THE RING IS AGAIN
YOURS. THE ONCE
POWERFUL PRINCE...
THE EVER,
POWERFUL PRINCE



IT'S DAX TIME AGAIN! IN THIS STORY, OLD MUSCLE-BOUND REALLY BRANCHES OUT! NO WONDER THEY SAY HE HAS A CHIP ON HIS SHOULDER.

DAX THE WARRIOR

"The Paradise Tree"

DAX FELT GOOD. HE HAD WILD BOAR SLUNG OVER HIS SHOULDER AND THAT MEANT ENOUGH FOOD FOR THE TIME BEING. HIS WALK WAS STRONG AND PROUD AS HE WHISTLED A BALLAD FROM DAYS GONE BY, A BALLAD OF BETTER TIMES.



ESTEBAN MAROTO



THIS SEEMS AS GOOD A PLACE AS ANY TO KINDLE A FIRE AND REST. AWFULLY QUIET HERE.



LISTEN, OLD TREE. I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK OF YOU. I'LL NEED SOME WOOD AS I PLAN A FIRE.



STRANGE! THE BRANCHES RESIST MY PULL... AS IF THEY'RE ALIVE!

INCREDIBLE! THE TREE IS BONE DRY. IT LOOKS TOO ROTTEN TO STAND. YET, MY AXE HARDLY SCRAPES IT.



KLINK...

HE SHUDDERED AS AN UNEARTHLY GROAN OF PAIN CAME FROM THE BOWELS OF THE TREE...



...AND GNARLED, TIRED BRANCHES WRAPPED THEMSELVES AROUND HIS ARMS LIKE WIRE.



HE FELT HIMSELF FALLING HEADLONG INTO A BOTTOMLESS ABYSS! NO WAY TO BREAK THE FALL. DAX FELL UNCONSCIOUS.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE MIND WHEN UNCONSCIOUS? DO WE MOVE INTO ANOTHER UNIVERSE JUST BEYOND OUR OWN--SOME ETHEREAL EXTENSION THAT PRIMITIVE MAN HAS ALWAYS CALLED THE UNKNOWN?



SKELETONS!
I'M NOT THE FIRST HERE.



A LIGHT IN THE DISTANCE!
WHERE IS THIS UNGODLY PLACE?



THE SWIRLING MIST CLEARED AS DAX STOOD, BRACING HIMSELF, AT THE START OF A PATHWAY THAT LED TO A HUGE, GLOWING EDIFICE, ONE THAT SEEMED TO BREATHE IN AND OUT AS IF IT HAD A LIFE ALL ITS OWN.

THERE ARE OTHERS HERE...
ENCHANTED WOMEN
BECKONING ME FORWARD!



WELCOME, STRANGER. YOU ARE A GUEST IN THE PALACE OF ASTARTEA! IT HAS BEEN LONG SINCE THE PRESENCE OF A MAN. OUR MISTRESS WILL BE MOST PLEASED.

YOU WELCOME DAX THE WARRIOR, SLAVE GIRL. NOT JUST ANY MAN!

... AN UNDERGROUND PALACE! SHAPED IN THE HEAD OF A SNAKE! ITS JAWS AWAIT DAX!



EVEN BATTLE-HONED DAX WAS SURPRISED BY THE UNEARTHLY BEAUTY OF HER CALLED ASTARTEA.

MY PRINCESS, THIS MAN IS CALLED DAX. TRULY, HIS EYES REVEAL HIS WONDERMENT.

DO NOT SEEK TO QUESTION WHAT IS NOT YOURS TO KNOW, FRAIL WARRIOR. KNOW ONLY THAT YOU ARE IN THE PALACE OF ASTARTEA. EVERYTHING HERE IS MINE AND MINE IS THE POWER TO GRANT YOU WHATEVER YOU WISH! KNOW THAT AND YOU WILL KNOW ENOUGH!

THE YEARS ARE MANY AND LONG SINCE PRINCESS ASTARTEA HAS SEEN THAT CALLED MAN... AND LONGER STILL SINCE ONE AS SPIRITED AS YOU.

MAN CALLED DAX, KNOW YOU THAT MY PALACE AND SERVANTS ARE YOURS TO COMMAND. REST NOW, GENTLE STRANGER.

AS HE LAY IN HEAVILY-PERFUMED WATERS, ATTENDED BY SLAVES, DAX THOUGHT ON THE HAUNTED WORDS OF ASTARTEA.

YES?
WHY DO YOU
APPROACH
ME?

YOUR STRENGTH IS AT LOW EBB. REST, DAX, FOR WE HAVE ALL ETERNITY TO BE TOGETHER.

AT THE SIMPLE FLICK OF HER FINGER-TIPS, TWO ODDLY DECORATED SLAVES APPEARED BESIDE DAX.

THE PRINCESS WISHES TO SEE YOU, MAN CALLED DAX.

GOOD.
FOR I WISH TO SEE HER ALSO. SOON I MUST LEAVE THIS MAGIC PLACE.

ALONE, IN HER CHAMBERS,
DAX TOLD ASTARTEA OF
HIS WISH TO DEPART.

WHY SHOULD YOU
WANT TO LEAVE
A WORLD
WHERE EVERY-
THING IS
YOURS FOR
THE ASKING?

I CANNOT
ANSWER YOUR
QUESTION. HOW
AM I TO EXPLAIN
THE WAYS OF A
FREE MAN, BE-
HOLDEN TO NO
ONE... THE FREEDOM
TO COME AND GO
AS THE WIND?

AT THE MENTION OF THE WORD
"FREEDOM," HER EYES WELLED
WITH TEARS. SHE SPOKE
HALTINGLY AS IF A KNIFE WAS
AT HER THROAT. "WE ARE
SLAVES," SHE SAID, "... SLAVES
TO OURSELVES AND OUR
POSSESSIONS. EVERYTHING
YOU SEE BEFORE YOU... ALL
THAT IS ASTARTEA'S CAME
THROUGH A TREATY... A
TREATY WHICH ENSLAVED ME."

FORGIVE ME IF
MY WORDS REMINDED
YOU... OF
PAIN.

HOLD ME... DAX, LET
US CREATE SWEETER
MEMORIES THAN THOSE
WHICH HANG
ABOUT ME
NOW!

I DO NOT WISH
TO THINK OF
PAIN AND
SLAVERY.


ASTARTEA
... MY
LOVE...

SHARE, DAX,
... IN THE
FREEDOM OF
TOGETHERNESS...
THE TWO OF
US ALONE.


AN
ETERNITY
OF BLISS
AWAITS
US, DAX.

AS THEY LAY IN
EACH OTHERS
ARMS, THE
WORLD AROUND
THEM SEEMED TO
CHANGE TO MIST.
IT WAS AS IF
THEY WERE THE
ONLY REAL AND
LIVING THINGS...






DAX FELT HOT BLOOD COURSE THROUGH HIS VEINS,
THE HURRIED, VIOLENT BLOOD OF ALL THINGS AS
IF THE UNIVERSE ITSELF FLOWED THROUGHOUT HIM.



SLOWLY, THE WORLD
TOOK ON SHAPE AGAIN
AS DAX SMELLED THE
HEADY PERFUME OF THE
INCENSE BURNER
BEHIND THEM.



THE
CONDITIONS OF
MY SERVITUDE
SIT BEFORE US,
IN THAT
FLAMING CENSER.
IT CAN PROVIDE
ME WITH ANY-
THING I WANT,
ANYTHING AT
ALL... BUT, IN
TURN, I MUST
NEVER LEAVE
THIS PLACE.



TELL ME, WOMAN, WHAT IS
IT THAT I SENSE ABOUT US?
IT IS AS IF THE VERY AIR
ITSELF SPEAKS OF THREAT.

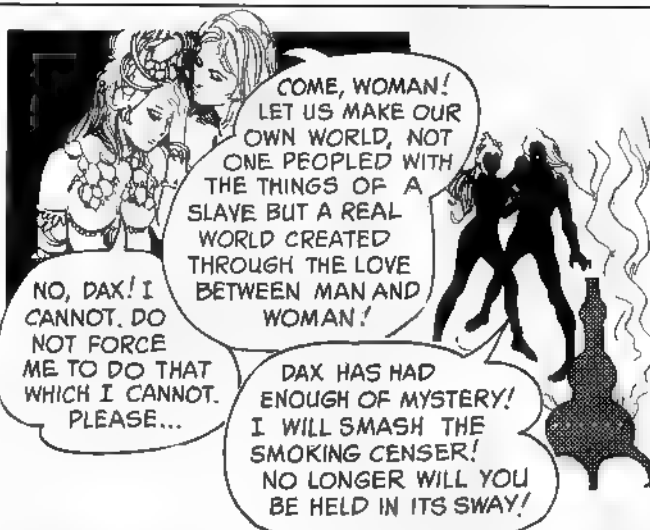
I TOLD YOU BEFORE OF
A TREATY, DAX. A TREATY
OF SERVITUDE.

THEN THIS PALACE NO
MATTER WHAT ITS RICHES
IS NO MORE THAN A
PRISON. COME, I
WILL TAKE YOU
FROM HERE.



NO, DAX. IT CAN ONLY BE DONE BY
BREAKING THE CENSER AND I DON'T
WANT TO DO THAT! ASTARTEA DOES NOT
WANT TO LIVE HER LIFE AGAIN.

WITH A POWER KNOWN TO FEW, DAX
GRASPED THE UHOLY CHALICE TIGHTLY
IN HIS HANDS AND CRACKED IT AGAINST
THE WALL.



NO, DAX! I
CANNOT. DO
NOT FORCE
ME TO DO THAT
WHICH I CANNOT.
PLEASE...

COME, WOMAN!
LET US MAKE OUR
OWN WORLD, NOT
ONE PEOPLED WITH
THE THINGS OF A
SLAVE BUT A REAL
WORLD CREATED
THROUGH THE LOVE
BETWEEN MAN AND
WOMAN!

DAX HAS HAD
ENOUGH OF MYSTERY!
I WILL SMASH THE
SMOKING CENSER!
NO LONGER WILL YOU
BE HELD IN ITS SWAY!

IT WAS AS IF THE PALACE WAS NO MORE THAN
A HOUSE OF CARDS COME TUMBLING DOWN
IN THE WIND! THE BEAUTIFUL SLAVE GIRLS HE
HAD SEEN JUST MOMENTS BEFORE WERE
CHANGED BEFORE HIS EYES...

No!

ENOUGH OF
THIS! I HAVE
HAD ENOUGH,
WOMAN.

CRASH!



... BECOME LIFELESS,
HULKING SKINS
CAUGHT UP IN THE
CLAWS OF A HUGE
DEVIL BEAST.
ASTARTEA
SCREAMED THE
WORD, "ASHTAROTH!
PRINCE OF HELL!"



THE WORDS OF THE DEVIL GOD ASHTAROTH SHOOK THE EARTH BENEATH THEM!

SO, MY LITTLE

ASTARTEA, YOU WOULD REVOLT AGAINST HIM WHO IS YOUR MASTER? SCORN THE VERY WONDER WORLD I CREATED SOLELY FOR YOU? THEN, RETURN, ASTARTEA... RETURN TO THAT WHICH YOU ONCE WERE!

HER PRAYERS WERE USELESS. SHE WAS NO BETTER THAN SEA VINE CAUGHT IN THE

CLAW OF THE CRAB. AND DAX STOOD POWERLESS, WATCHING THE WOMAN HE KNEW IN BEAUTY BECOME A REPTILIAN HELLS-PAWN, A CLINGING SNAKE... DOOMED TO CRAWL THE EARTH IN EVERLASTING FUTILITY!

NO! HAVE MERCY! KILL ME NOW. DON'T CHANGE ME BACK! PLEASE!

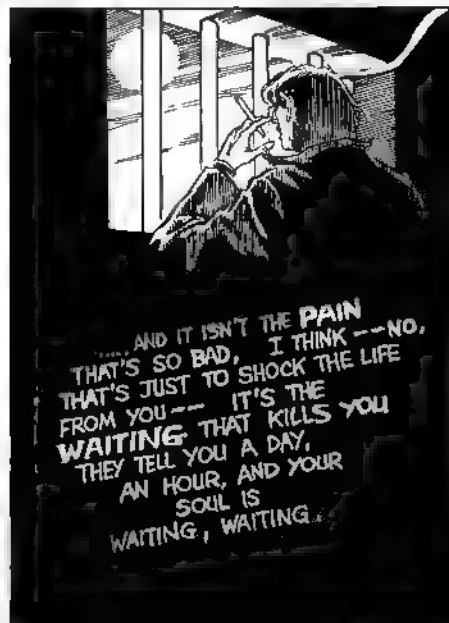
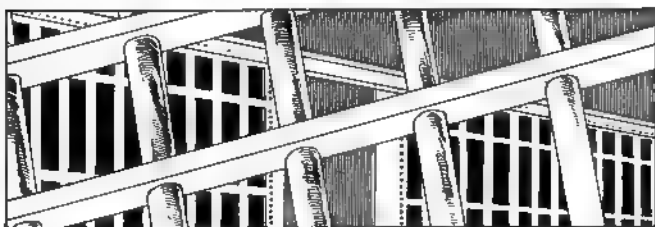
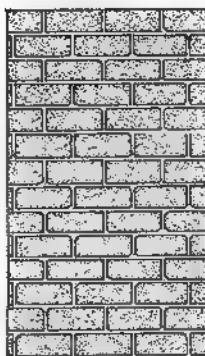
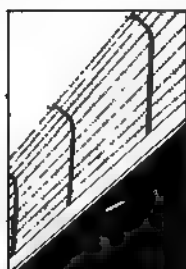
YAHHHHHH!

EEEEEE

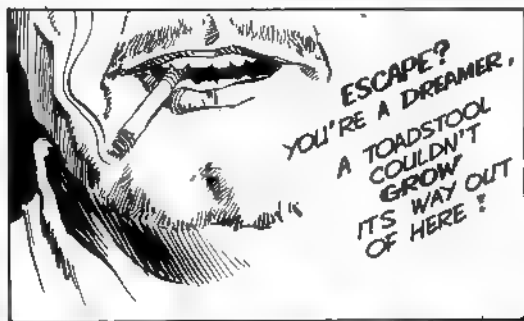
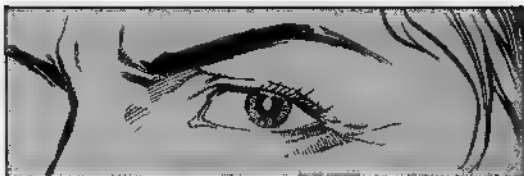
SOME SNAKE IN THE GRASS SHE TURNED OUT TO BE! IF I WERE DAX, I WOULDN'T TAKE THIS LYING DOWN! DAX ALL, FOLKS!

EDITOR'S NOTE... IN THE STUDY OF DEMONOLOGY, THE GOD **ASHTAROTH** IS KNOWN AS THE DEVIL. HE IS PICTURED AS A GIANT GOAT-LIKE MAN AND CARRIES A SNAKE IN ONE HAND. **ASTARTEA** IS OFTEN SHOWN AS THAT SNAKE. SHE IS ASHTAROTH'S DEVIL WOMAN. PICTURED EITHER WEARING A BE-JEWELLED HEAD-DRESS OF CRESCENT SHAPE OR AS A SNAKE, ASTARTEA PLOTS THE RUINATION OF MANKIND THROUGH SENSUAL PLEASURES --

DEATHFALL





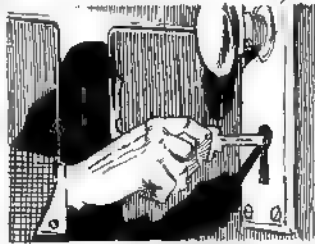




YOU CAME HOME TIRED.
IT HAD BEEN A LONG DAY.
YOU HAD FLOWERS. YOU
PLANNED ON SURPRISING
LETHA.



BUT
NOT LIKE
THAT!







MURDERER! GUILTY.....!!

HANG

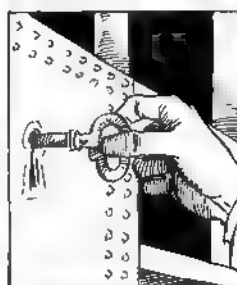
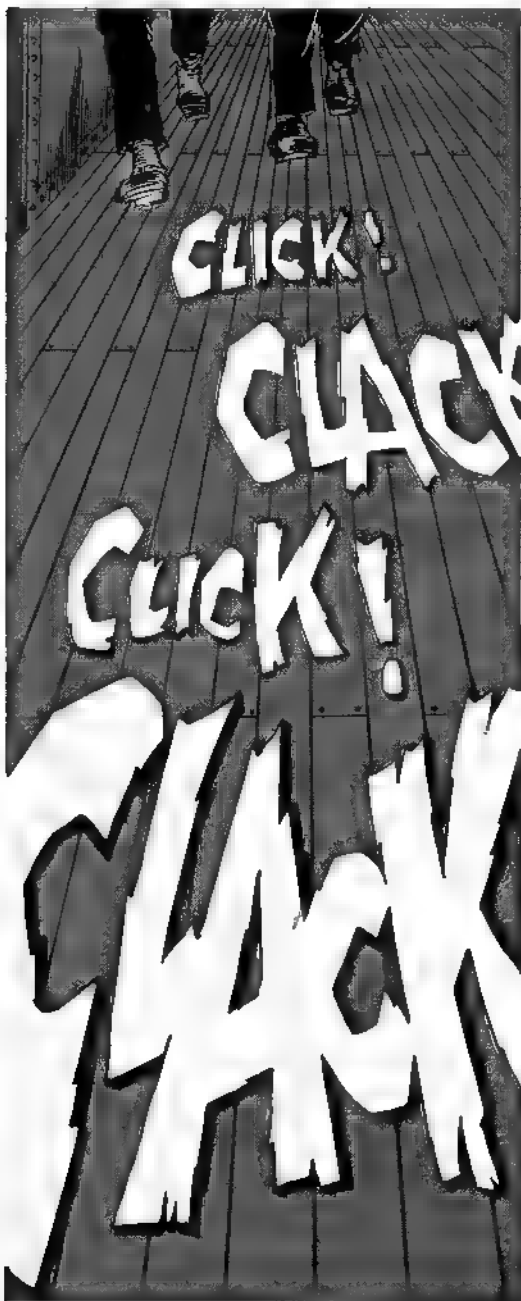
HANG BY THE NECK UNTIL DEAD ... !!



DEATH? IT'S NOT SO BAD
EXCEPT I DON'T WANT TO DIE ?
I CAN'T DIE. IT'S FRIGHTENING!



CLICK!... CLICK...CLICK!





WOULD YOU LIKE A HAIRCUT?



WOULD YOU LIKE SOMETHING SPECIAL TO EAT?



WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE CHAPLAIN BEFORE.....



A CIGARETTE, PERHAPS?



ANYTHING, MR. PAPILLON?

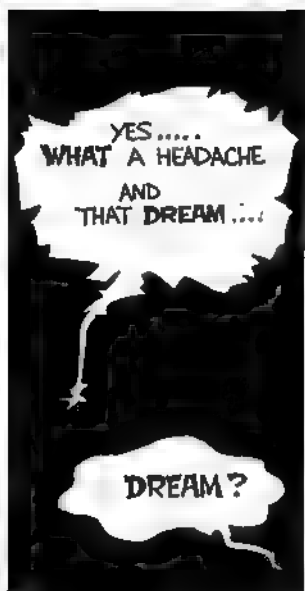
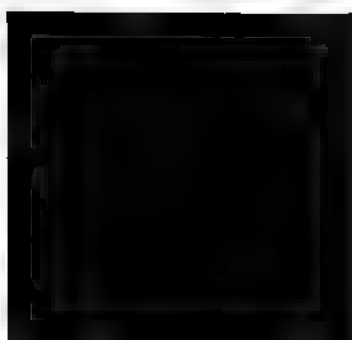


ISN'T THERE ANYTHING — ANYTHING AT ALL — THAT WE CAN DO FOR YOU?



NOTHING!
NOTHING!
JUST HANG ME!
YOU UNDERSTAND?





YES, A TERRIBLE
DREAM.

I WAS A MAN--
A MAN
IMPRISONED
BEHIND BRICK AND
WIRE,
GUARDED
BY A DROOLING
CUR.

I WAS A CONDEMNED
MAN-- A MAN
WITH NO CHANCE OF
ESCAPE AND I HAD THE
HOT AND ROTTEN
MEMORY OF MURDER
ON MY SOUL.

I DIED
FOR IT.

MY TIME CAME.

I WAS
LED AWAY.

I WAS
GRANTED MY
LAST WISH,

WHICH
WAS
ONLY TO DIE
QUICKLY.

I DID

THEN
I
AWOKE--
HERE.

IT'S LIKE THAT
MYTH.... THAT CRAZY
MYTH I REMEMBER
FROM CHILDHOOD!

ONE NIGHT
A CHINESE SAGE
DREAMT HE WAS A
BUTTERFLY. HE WAS
UNAWARE THAT
HE WAS A MAN...

SUDDENLY, HE AWOKE AND
HE WAS A MAN.

HE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER HE WAS
A MAN WHO HAD DREAMT HE WAS
A BUTTERFLY....
OR WHETHER HE WAS A BUTTERFLY
WHO DREAMT HE WAS A MAN.

NOW,
I ASK
MYSELF:

AM I A DEAD
MAN WHO
DREAMT HE
WAS ALIVE ...

OR AM I
ALIVE
DREAMING
I AM
DEAD?

OR IS THIS ALL JUST....

THE END



FREAK-OUT
TIME! THE CARNIVAL'S
IN TOWN, CIRCUS
JERKS! SO GRAB A
BAG OF YOUR **POP'S**
CORNS AND HURRY
TO THE SIDE SHOW!
YOU MAY STILL HAVE
TIME TO CATCH...

THE PRODIGY SON

ONE BY ONE THEY EXHIBITED THEMSELVES -- THE
FAT LADY, THE FLEA TRAINER, THE
ELEPHANT BOY, THE SWORD SWALLOWER WITH HIS
GLOWING NEON ROD. RESTLESSLY THEY AWAITED
THE BARKER'S FINAL PITCH...

AND NOW, FOLKS,
WHAT YOU'VE ALL BEEN
WAITING FOR! THE
ULTIMATE CLIMAX OF
OUR **BIZARRE** SHOW! A
MAN MADE **DIFFERENT** BY
THE WILL OF GOD... HE
STANDS BEFORE YOU NOW
AS A MERE SIDESHOW
ATTRACTION THE STUFF
OF A BARKER'S SHOUTS...
BE THANKFUL YOU WERE
BORN **NORMAL!**

THERE WAS ONE IN THE AUDIENCE WHOSE INTEREST IN THE
ROBED MAN SEEMED LESS MORBID THAN THE OTHERS. HER
ATTENTION WAS NOT ON THE BARKER'S MEMORIZED **SPIEL...**

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN...
PREPARE FOR A **SHOCK!** IF
YOU HAVE A WEAK HEART... OR
STOMACH... LEAVE NOW AND
WE WILL REFUND HALF YOUR
ADMISSION FEE. I GIVE YOU...

...BUT ON THE HANDSOME FACE OF THIS MAN SHE
HAD NEVER SEEN BEFORE... THE MAN CALLED...

HOWARD CANELLY...
THE **PRODIGY SON!**

HOWARD OPENED HIS ROBE. THE CROWD HUDDLED TOGETHER, RUSHED AT THE SIGHT OF THE INCREDIBLE HORROR CONFRONTING THEM.

HOWARD... AND HIS SIAMESE BROTHER THEODORE, WHO EXISTS AS A **PARASITE**, LIVING OFF THE NOURISHMENT OF HIS **HOST**!

SEE HOW BROTHER THEODORE MOVES WHEN I TOUCH HIM! HE'S **ALIVE**, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! AS ALIVE AS YOU OR I! BUT TOTALLY DEPENDENT ON HOWARD FOR HIS SURVIVAL!

FOR A FEW MOMENTS, BRENDA'S EYES WERE FASTENED TO THE GROTESQUE **THING** THAT HUNG FROM HOWARD'S BODY... HUNG AND WRIGGLED.

IT'S **GHASTLY**! IT CAN ONLY BE A CLEVER **TRICK**. I DON'T CARE ANYWAY.

WHY HE GOES TO SO MUCH TROUBLE TO FOOL THE PUBLIC IS HIS BUSINESS. BUT THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT HIS **FACE**... SOMETHING THAT I CAN'T REGIST...

THE NOVELTY OF THIS FREAK OF NATURE SOON PASSED AWAY. THERE WERE OTHER THINGS TO SEE AT THE CARNIVAL. THE CUSTOMERS FINALLY MOVED ON AND THE SIDE SHOW STAGE WAS BARE... EXCEPT FOR **ONE** LONE WOMAN.

SHOW'S OVER, LADY!... I SAID THE SHOW'S **OVER**!

OH, I'M SORRY! I WASN'T LISTENING...

AFTER CLOSING TIME, HOWARD DECIDED TO LEAVE THE WAGON FOR A LATE SNACK AT A NEARBY DINER. BUTTONING UP HIS COAT, HE THOUGHT OF THE GIRL WHO STARED AT HIM FROM THE AUDIENCE OF THE LAST SHOW.



A CLAP OF THUNDER ROARED AS HE OPENED THE DOOR AND STOPPED DEAD.



SHE SMILED, NODDED. CLUTCHING HIS ARM, SHE LET HIM LEAD THE WAY AS THE GAUDY CARNIVAL RETIRED FOR THE NIGHT AND THE LIGHTS DIMMED.



THEY ENTERED THE DINER. WARM & ALONE TOGETHER, REFUGEES FROM THE RAIN. TO THE GIRL... IT WAS STRANGE BEING IN THE OFF-DUTY COMPANY OF CARNEY FOLK.



IT WAS A BIZARRE WEDDING BECAUSE HOWARD SUSPECTED THAT BRENDA ONLY WANTED HIM AS AN **ESCAPE**... AN UNSUCCESSFUL PAST LOVE. BUT NEVER BEFORE HAD A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN SEEN HIM AND NOT FLED IN HORROR. THERE WAS CONTEMPT IN HIS VOICE AS HE PRONOUNCED THE BINDING WORDS...





THE HONEYMOON WAS SHORT...
AND SOMEHOW TRAGIC.

AT LAST WE'RE ALONE.
CARNIVAL WEDDINGS TAKE PLACE
AT SUCH LATE HOURS. I THOUGHT THE
OTHER PERFORMERS WOULD NEVER
LEAVE. SOME OF THOSE **FREAKS...**
FRIGHTEN ME!



THIS IS THE MOMENT I'VE DREADED, BRENDA.
BUT **YOU** PROPOSED TO **ME!**

GAHHHH!
TH-THEODORE... B-BUT
I THOUGHT IT WAS AN
ILLUSION! SOME SORT
OF TRICK!



**WHAT? YOU THOUGHT THIS WAS A CHEAP
SIDE-SHOW **FAKE?** YOU POOR MISERABLE
LITTLE **FOOL!** I'VE BEEN LIKE THIS
SINCE BIRTH! NOW YOU'VE GOT A
FREAK FOR A HUSBAND!**

OH, GOD. NO!
THIS HAS TO BE A
NIGHTMARE! IT
CAN'T BE
HAPPENING!

AS BEFORE HOWARD HURRIED
TO HIS DOCTOR. HIS CONDITION
WAS SUCH THAT HE DIDN'T
NEED AN APPOINTMENT.

WELL
DOCTOR, WHAT
DO THE X-RAYS
SHOW?

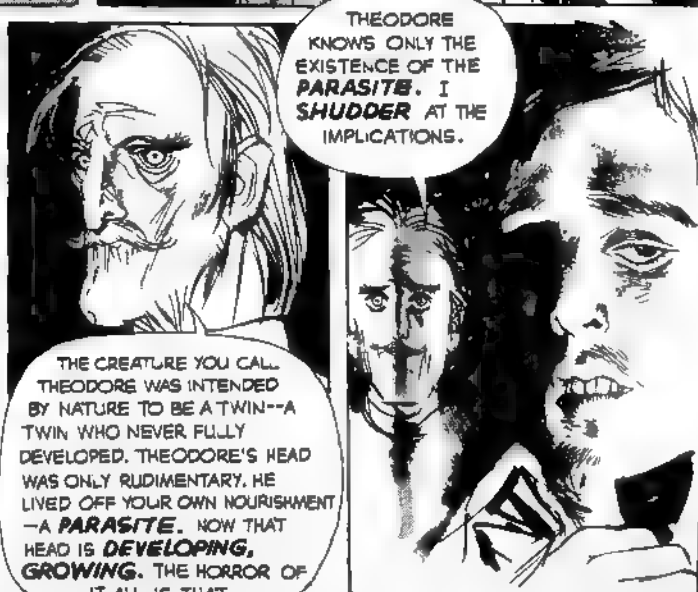


IT'S JUST
LIKE BEFORE, I'M
AFRAID. ONLY YOUR
DEVELOPMENT HAS
TAKEN ON **NEW**
PROPORTIONS.

BUT IT DID HAPPEN. THEY WERE LEGALLY MARRIED AND THE DAYS
THAT FOLLOWED MARKED A GROWING HATRED BETWEEN THE
TWO. BRENDA HAD GROWN BITTER IN HER DISILLUSIONMENT.
THEN ONE MORNING... IT HAPPENED **AGAIN!**



**ARGHHHH... THE PAINS
IN MY STOMACH! LIKE BEFORE,
ONLY WORSE! MUCH
WORSE!**



THEODORE
KNOWS ONLY THE
EXISTENCE OF THE
PARASITE. I
SHUDDER AT THE
IMPLICATIONS.

THE CREATURE YOU CALL
THEODORE WAS INTENDED
BY NATURE TO BE A TWIN--A
TWIN WHO NEVER FULLY
DEVELOPED. THEODORE'S HEAD
WAS ONLY RUDIMENTARY. HE
LIVED OFF YOUR OWN NOURISHMENT
--A **PARASITE**. NOW THAT
HEAD IS **DEVELOPING,**
GROWING. THE HORROR OF
IT ALL IS THAT...

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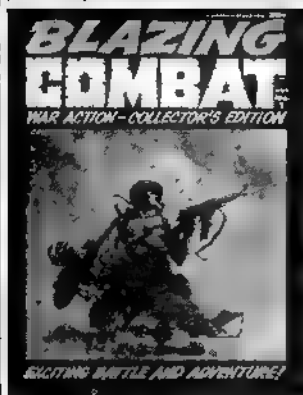
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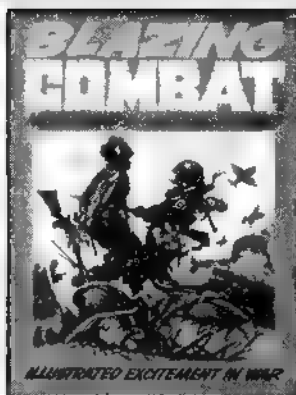
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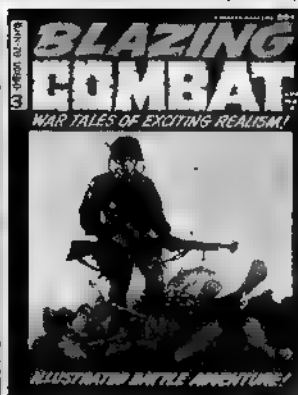
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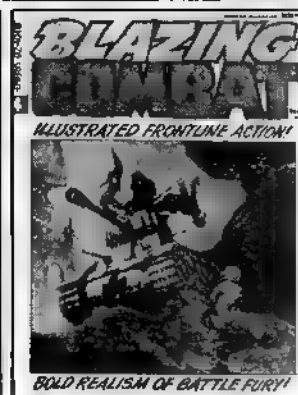
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FAN FARE

EERIE

PROFILE: WRITER BUD SAUNDERS



Writer Buddy Saunders whose work "Pity The Grave Digger" appears in this issue, p. 68.

Although I was born in a small town in Oklahoma in 1947 (that makes me 25 years old for those of you who have trouble with numbers), I've lived most of my life in various Texas towns and cities like El Paso, Corpus Christi, Midland and Arlington.

At East Texas State University, I majored in art education. Since then, I've been teaching art at a junior high

in a city near Arlington.

While I enjoy teaching, I also enjoy writing, especially science fiction and fantasy. I first became hooked on comics with a copy of Donald Duck back in 1960. The thing fascinated me and I soon began collecting comics. An other of my interests is Science Fiction and my stack of S-F paperbacks matches my comics collection.

While I'm not certain, I believe my interest in art was the chief cause behind my interest in the graphic story medium. Back when I contributed to fandom publications, I thought of myself as an artist first and a writer second. Now just the opposite is true. It does help however to have a basic understanding of both disciplines (art and story) when working for the comics medium. At present, I'm a member of the "Dallas in '73" bidding committee, an organization which is seeking to have the World Science Fiction Convention held in Dallas in 1973.

KINGDOM COME

By James Charles, Houston, Texas

Night had fallen on the kingdom of Xirx. The mountains were calm and quiet, almost devoid of life. The plains that lay at the foot of the mountains seemed drenched in red for countless battles had been waged there. The armies of Xirx and Xucl, ten thousand strong, had been utterly crushed by the invading armies of Baron Zeng, ruler of the bandit state of Zenguron in that empty, barren space. And now, save for the host of vultures and other birds of carrion, no life moved on the crimson plains. In startling contrast to the brutally mangled bodies, one body, that of a woman, was untouched. This was Krixia, Princess of Xucl. The Zenguron warrior responsible for her death was sure he had killed her but he had failed. A vulture landed near her. But she awoke to his cawing. As she stood there in that vast plain of death, she thought of her past and all the tyranny she had witnessed in her short life. At the slightest sound of movement behind her, she turned to the welcome sight of Xagaro, the royal steed. Now there was a way back to Vitruma, capital of Xucl, where the evil Baron Zeng ruled all powerful.

As Xagaro carried the Princess into Vitruma, the sight she saw was much as she had imagined it. Scores of people hung from crosses outside the city gates while hundreds of others littered the streets. Strangely, the bodies all seemed drained and she remembered tales she had heard of those who thrive on the blood of the living. Quickly, she stole into the castle. It was at the top of the stairs that she saw Zeng slumped over in death, a demon servant beside him and she knew that the demon controlled the spirit of Zeng and had feasted on him in life, turning him into a drained and evil hulk. As a horde of dark vampire figures moved toward her, she slashed away with her blade, certain there was no hope.

When the riders from Xirx found the decayed castle of Zeng, they were horrified by the sight of a dead woman at the foot of the stairs, a rusted blade in her hands, piles of lifeless ashes strewn about her feet. As the wind blew, she fell.

Fan page writers Rick Cook & Joe Lettis last had their work published on the Fan Club pages of Creepy #43. Follows yet another tale by the duo hauntingly titled...

THE GRIM SPECTRE

By Rick Cook & Joe Lettis
Lansing, Michigan

A melancholy figure hovered over the Benett house hold, like an apparition of death. From him came the gloomy stench of death and decay. He waited in the cool night air, watching the house for signs of life, peering through the roof as if it was glass.

"Hi, honey! I'm home," Harry called as he entered the old and poorly furnished house he called home. A strange and ominous quiet greeted him. Unnerved, he searched as a cold chill ran his spine. The living room was dark and empty as if all life had gone out of it. He grasped the kitchen doorknob and slowly pushed the door open, afraid of what lay beyond. Before him, outlined in the pale moonlight of the window hung his wife, her neck tied with rope from a ceiling beam. Shuddering, trying to stifle a scream, he let his hand edge across the stucco wall in search of the light switch. His children lay in death on the tiled floor, both strangled. With the light on, he saw a second noose hanging beside his wife and blowing in the slight wind. He knew it was meant for him.

Above the house, the dark figure knew the glory of triumph. The image below grew dim and he moved his shadow through the clawing air.



Fan artist BRUCE WALDMAN of Orangeburg, N.Y. drew this futuristic self-portrait.

SNOW

By Jerry Bradman
Miami Beach, Fla.

Jones jumped back from the window sill as the hideous face returned his stare. He couldn't help it. As many times as he had seen the face looking back at him, he still froze up in fear. The faces were always hideous. Black hairy faces with long, deformed snouts, eyes set close together and rows of sharp, canine teeth. No one had ever explained who they were. Since an early age, his mother had always warned him to keep inside when it snowed and it was snowing now, heavily.

Jones was alone in his room in the darkness. He watched, hardly able to move, as the dark figure scratched at the window and then hurried away. Jones walked to the window, fearful the thing was still there, waiting for him. But it was gone in the obscuring darkness and snow. Why had she warned him never to go out side when it snowed? His terror stilled for the moment, he rubbed his just-shaven chin and took a deep breath of the artificial air which blew in through the vents around the small, sparsely furnished room. He lived in an underground city ever since the last great thermonuclear war. "Why?" he asked himself aloud. "Why all this secrecy?" But there was no one to explain. His mother had long since passed away from radioactive burns suffered during the war. He had only the memory of her childhood warning. Now, everyone lived in underground hovels deep beneath the earth. Yet, it snowed year in and year out and figures hid in the snow. Suddenly, the lights shot out, the signal that everyone was to sleep. He stood still, staring out the window, gritting his teeth. "Got to find out," he mumbled. "Got to."

It was deathly cold in the snow. He had no idea it could be this cold. Without hardly realizing it, he doubled over in pain. It felt as if small scaly hands were tearing away the layers of skin on his face. Despairing, he looked to the door inside, electronically locked. Struggling, he felt his face. It seemed hairy. He ran to a nearby window as best he could, stared, recognized the reflection and screamed. He was one of them now.

anonymous little tale came by way of Cheshire, Connecticut. Signed "The Phantom Bomber," it's titled simply. . . .

PURITAN'S PROGRESS

Short, stocky man stands before newsmen, cameras, microphones. "Yes, my friends, this should most certainly revolutionize the American way of life. Increased work efficiency, reduced suicide rates, increased spending, and generally, a happier America." Stroking his moustache, he added, "This little machine here is a wonder! Simply attach these padded earphones to your head and these comfortable bracelets to your wrists, these anklets to your feet, and you have ecstasy for a mere ten dollars. Pleasure at a low cost. And this timer prevents the user from losing track of time and missing important appointments by easing off the sensations, allowing you to awaken refreshed." He smiled. "Believe me," he said in a sotto voice that revealed a deep Christian motivation behind the marketing of his Electrogratifier, "this electronic marvel, proved 100% effective and safe in laboratory tests, is not merely a pleasure machine. It is a helpful device that may help those afflicted with drug addiction, alcoholism, and painful diseases. It also provides relief from the pressures of the day for tired businessmen, rich or poor. It will save marriages, bring relief to the suffering poor, and unite all men in love, as it eliminates the hostilities that cause hate.

And it did. It sold like electric hotcakes. And the short fat man gave millions to charities, lowered the price of the Electrogratifier, and gave them away at quiz shows and bazaars, banquets and conferences. "I am not in business to make money," he answered the critics who claimed that the machine caused an unseen spectacle of decay that dwarfed those of ancient Rome in its decline. He promised that the machine did not corrupt the youth or take the minds of Americans away from such important matters as elections and church attendance. "I am here only to provide a service to mankind," he said.

His critics continued to harp about the dangers of the Electrogratifier but it wasn't enough to kill the market or dampen sales greatly.

Thousands bought the machine and soon the market died and the millions of people who bought one died, a smile creasing their lips. "Why?" he answered. "I did what had to be done. Our world has no room for those who seek after pleasure for their own sake."



"The Night the Snow Spilled Blood"

Writer Don McGregor comments on the story behind his 12-page ecology epic "The Night The Snow Spilled Blood" which appeared in EERIE #38 and caused much comment. The story paralleled a little man who sought to tamper with the forces of life and death amid the larger tapestry of an America bent on controlling the elements. Both ventures turn to failure as if doomed from the start. At left, a scene from the story.

"The Night The Snow Spilled Blood" is, like many of the other stories I've done for Warren Publications, concerned with the human condition. Turner, Claire, and eventually Crane, the principals of the story, are flesh and blood people, bleeding psychologically into their environment, with past histories that have known triumphs certainly, but also have been dealt severe hurts that nearly cripple them. As a by-product, and because it is a part of their environment and the world in which they, and sadly us, live in, the story also has overtones of the larger crises that invade the personal crises of our lives—in this case, the combination of ecology and pollution. In fact, the intermingling of these world wide crises colliding with those crises of individual dimensions makes it an even more difficult world to exist in and cope with; a fact that, though they are not aware of it, all of these characters, Turner included, are confronted with. We all have to deal with this fact to some extent.

There are a few other commentaries here, including a minor bit on planned obsolescence; it touches, of course, on the complexities of human relationships; and even examines, briefly, the different manners in which people experience the same festivities or stimuli (Note all of the characters' reactions to Christmas in general).

It's an admirable trait that the Warren magazines are displaying at this point in letting the writers make a few comments on their works—at least, at this point in comics history, it seems to be a good idea as many readers aren't aware that there might be more than cardboard caricatures walking through the pages of a horror magazine—that stories might even have a few subtleties. At any rate, the point of this piece, is that old Cousin EERIE, asked how the creation of "The Night The Snow Spilled Blood" came about, and one thing I'd never dare do is cross old Cousin EERIE. At first, I was captured with the idea of doing a story about a murderer who suddenly and inexplicably finds himself somehow covered with his corpse's blood. That's a hairy scene in anybody's book; and it was a challenge to consider how he would react to such an occurrence. That seemed a nice enough situation, and I had the piece of dialogue concerning the Charlie Brown Christmas special already in mind. Ecology has become a prominent concern lately and rightly so. It set in mind the added elements that tied the elements together. My thanks to Tom Sutton for a very creative art job throughout, especially in depicting the twelve panel arrangement on p. 45 for the dialogue scene.

—DON MCGREGOR



"The Night The Snow Spilled Blood" from EERIE #38.

PARADISE LOST!

By David Yates
Opolous, La.

Victor and Hope awoke from their long sleep in suspended animation. After a brief reunion, they checked the buttons and dials of their vessel drifting in outer space. It was hard to believe that fifteen billion years before, interplanetary war had raged between Earth and Venus. Victor and Hope were the only survivors. Venus lay before them through the viewport, barren and desolate, an ashen world, the remains of a once prosperous civilization. Between them, they hoped to rebuild the planet and start anew without the memory of war. They landed the rocket and soon disembarked.

"We could make something of this," Hope said. As he took his arm, radiation fire destroyed the both of them. The Venusian smiled.



Cartoon sketch of a bug-eyed man examining himself was drawn by San Jose, Ca. EERIE reader J. A. WILLIAMS.

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By David A. Wasyk
Edmonton, Canada

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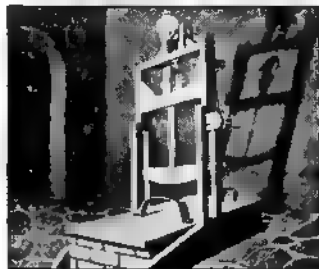
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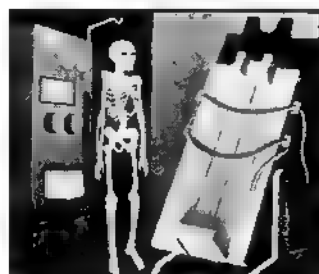
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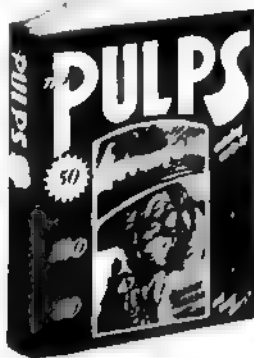
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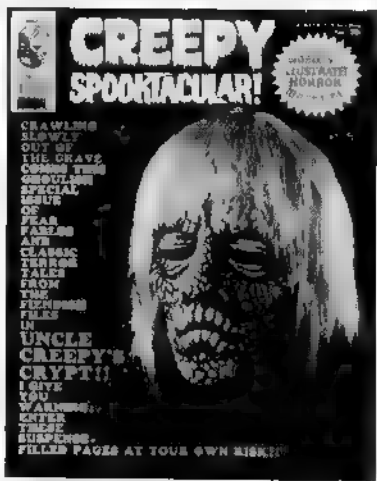
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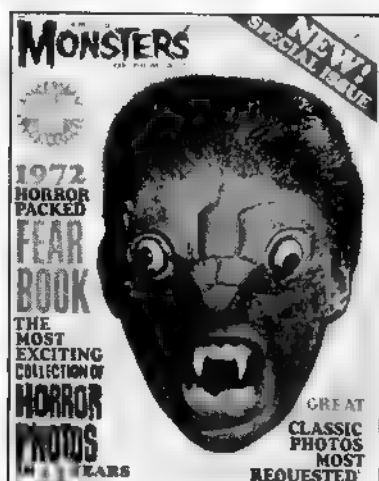
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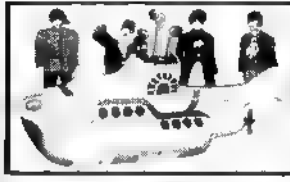
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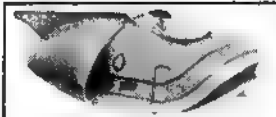


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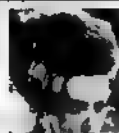
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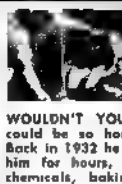
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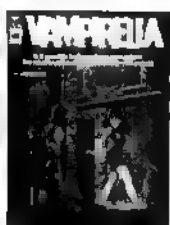
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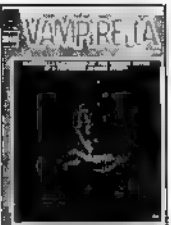
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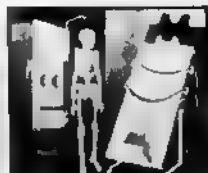
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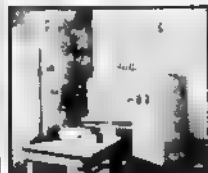
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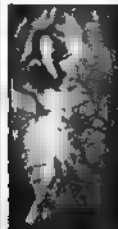
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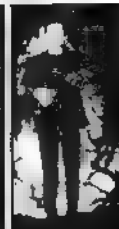
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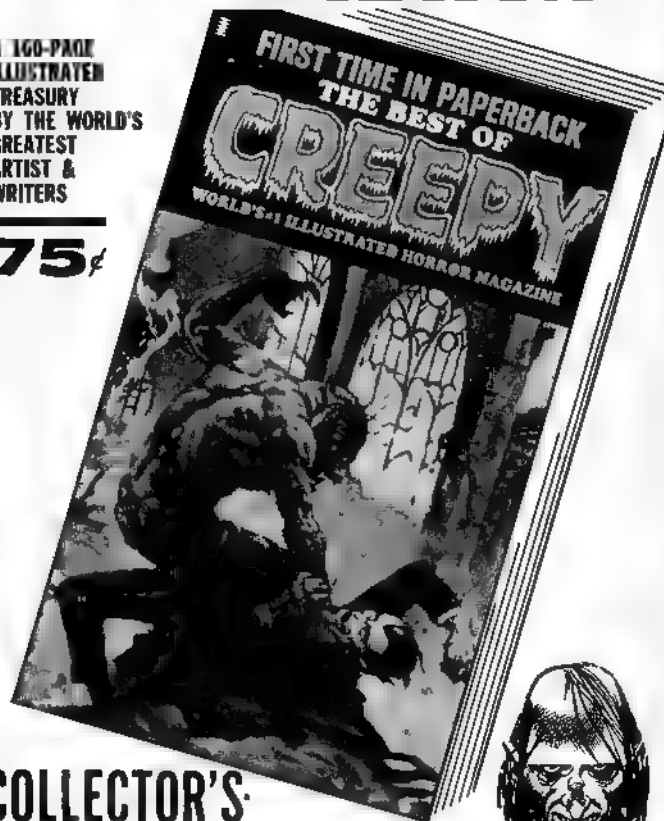
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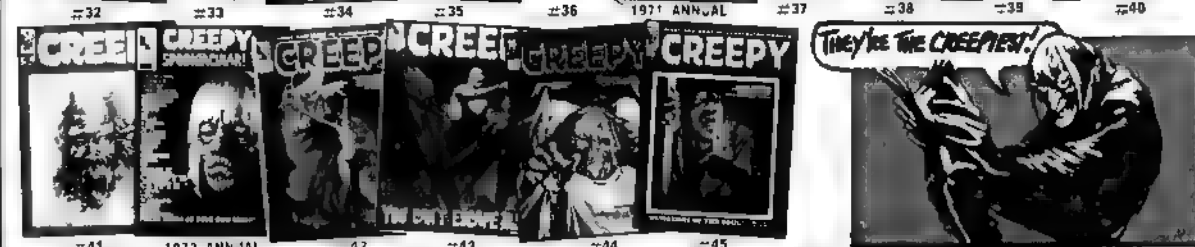
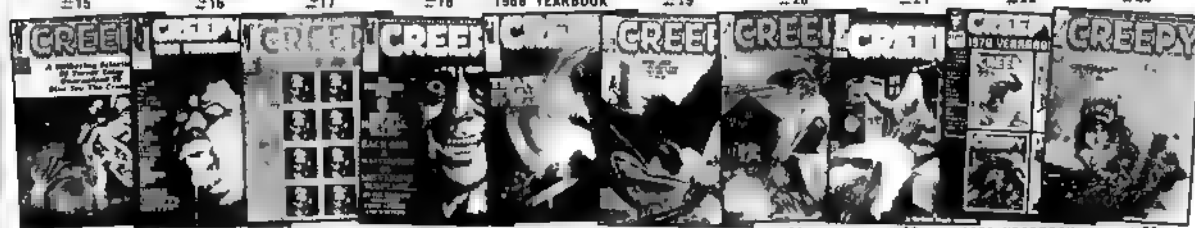
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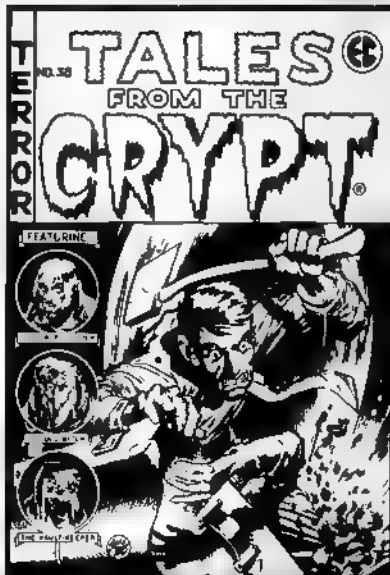
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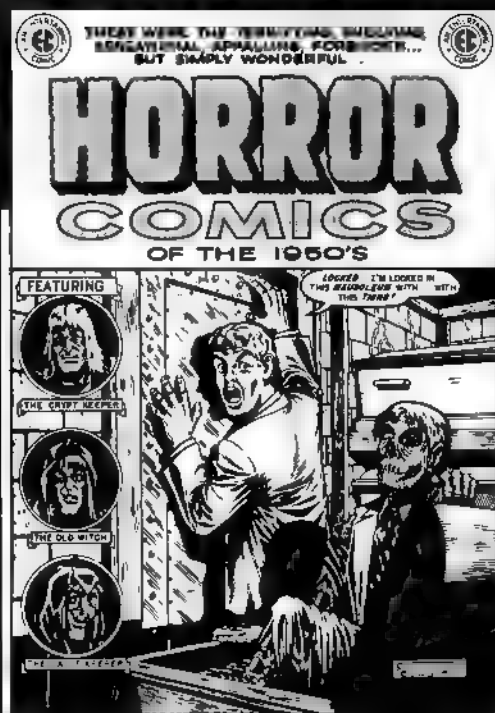
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COME NOW, LAD!
PUT YOUR BACK INTO
IT. DO YOU WANT OLD
WAREHAM THERE TO
CATCH HIS **DEATH**
O'COLD?

WHY,
MR. ELGER! SHOULD
WE MAKE **SUCH**
JOKES OVER
THE **DEAD?**



PITY THE GRAVE DIGGER!

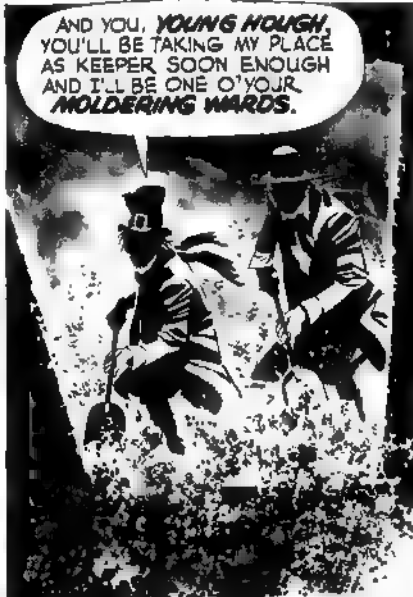
AYE, LAD,
WE **SHOULD** IF WE
WANT TO KEEP OUR
SANITY THROUGH
THE LONG BLACK NIGHTS
AND EMPTY DAYS.

AND YOU, **YOUNG HOUGH**,
YOU'LL BE TAKING MY PLACE
AS KEEPER SOON ENOUGH
AND I'LL BE ONE O'YOUR
MOLD'RING WARDS.

GUIDED BY FIFTY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE,
OLD ELIAS' SHOVEL, EASILY TAPPED THE
LAST CLODS OF EARTH INTO PLACE...

THERE
NOW, WE'VE
GOT MR. WAREHAM
TUCKED IN **SNUG**.
AND NONE TOO
SOON, I THINK.

AYE,
THE YARD
WILL BE
BLACK AND **FULL**
OF WIND
TONIGHT



THEN, AS THE GRAVEKEEPER AND HIS ASSISTANT RETURNED TO THEIR SMALL COTTAGE BESIDE THE CEMETERY...



HOUGH CALLICOTT WATCHED THE OLD MAN'S FACE, WHITE AND TREMBLING WITH FEAR. HE WONDERED HOW A BAT COULD SCARE A MAN WHO HAD LIVED SO LONG **AMONG THE DEAD...**



ONCE WITHIN THE COTTAGE, ELIAS BECAME AWARE OF HIS APPRENTICE'S QUESTIONING STARE...



ELIAS LEANED VERY CLOSE TO HOUGH, HIS OLD EYES GLITTERING WITH A **SPECIAL SECRET.**



"BE SILENT, BOY, HEED ME. IT MAY BE THAT ONE DAY YOU WILL **DESTROY A VAMPIRE** ... JUST AS I DID. I WAS AS YOUNG AS YOU, HOUGH..."

OLD MARLOW DID SPEAK THE TRUTH! THERE ARE VAMPIRES AND THEY MUST BE DESTROYED LEST THE GRAVEYARD BECOME TAINTED WITH THEIR FOUL PRESENCE!



I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY TIMES I'VE SHOVED A **WOODEN STAKE** THROUGH A **DECAYED HEART** OR, TREMBLING ... LOPPED OFF A **GROTESQUE HEAD**...

LITTLE DO THE VILLAGERS REALIZE HOW I, A **SIMPLE GRAVE KEEPER**, GUARD THEM WHILE THEY SLEEP IN THEIR BEDS... GUARD THEM FROM ALL MANNER OF **HORROR**...

THERE WAS THE NIGHT THAT TWO GRAVE ROBBERS BROKE INTO THE CEMETERY. I WAS UNABLE TO REACH THEM IN TIME AND THEY HAD ALREADY UNEARTHED A BODY...

GOT US A BIG ONE HERE, SAMUEL ... **BIG DEVIL, HE IS!**

I SAW THEN THAT THE MORBID FOOLS HAD UNEARTHED ONE OF THE VAMPIRE DEAD... I READIED MYSELF A Mallet AND STAKE, KNOWING THAT I WOULD HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE **UNDEAD**...

LORD HELP US!

GOOD GOD!... **A VAMPIRE!**

IT'S ALIVE... ONE OF THE UNDYING! MY GOD!

IT WAS ALMOST COMIC SEEING THEM TRYING TO RUN OFF... A KIND OF JUST DESERT FOR THE MANY **DESECRATIONS** THEY HAD PERFORMED!

NO TIME TO CATCH THEM!

BUT THERE CAME A TIME WHEN THE THOUGHT OF VAMPIRES WAS SUBMERGED IN A FAR GREATER, **UNKNOWN TERROR!**

PLEASE... UNHHH!

IT WAS TERRIBLE, HOUGH! TERRIBLE! THE THING CRUMPLED BEFORE ME, AND I KNEW THERE WERE MORE OF THEM ALL AROUND ME, JUST WAITING FOR THE RIGHT MOMENT TO STRIKE!

SOMETHING DEVoured... **THE CORPSE!**

AURATEON

I, WHO IN TIMES PAST, HAD BEEN CALLED UPON TO UNEARTH BODIES
SOMETIMES SIX MONTHS BURIED, WAS STILL REPULSED BY WHAT I SAW...



I PUT THESE
TWO **POOR SOULS**
TO REST ONLY LAST
WEEK AND NOW...
BOTH **GNAWED TO
THE VERY BONES!**

I WAS TERRIFIED, YOUNG HOUGH, JUST AS ANY
SANE MAN WOULD BE, AND MORE SO WHEN
I **DISCOVERED...**



ANOTHER
BODY... **HORRIBLY
MUTILATED...** AND
FOOTPRINTS **SMALL
BLOODY TRACKS...**
HUNDREDS OF THEM!

AND SO IT WAS THAT, LATE ONE NIGHT, I HEARD **NOISES** IN A
FRESHLY-FILLED CRYPT! GUIDED BY MOONLIGHT, I
FOUND THEM...



HEAVEN PROTECT
ME! THEY'RE THE THING
I'VE MOST DREADED
**WIDE-EYES
LITTLE...**

THEY FAILED TO SEE ME. THEY WERE MUCH TOO
PREOCCUPIED WITH FEASTING ON THE DEAD! I
HAD STATIONED DYNAMITE NEARBY FOR A
PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT SECTION OF THE EARTH.
I KNEW THEN THAT I COULD USE THE DYNAMITE
AGAINST THEM, THOUGH I WAS HARDLY ABLE TO
KEEP MY HANDS STEADY TO LIGHT THE FUSE!



"DESPERATE, I THREW THE FLAMING STICK
INTO THE VAULT, BUT NOT BEFORE..."

"SCREAMING, I THREW MYSELF TO THE
GROUND JUST AS TWO HELLISH BAT
SHAPES DARTED PAST..."

"THEN THE VAULT **EXPLODED,**
FOREVER **DESTROYING** ALL
THE **HELLSPAWN** TRAPPED
WITHIN..."



**BLACK SHAPES,
DARTING AT ME!
AURGH!**

HAHHH!





HOUGH STEPPED INTO THE
HALF-LIGHT OF THE TOMB,
THERE TO SEE...

IT... IT'S **TRUE!**
THEY... THEY'RE
CHANGING INTO...
IT'S **UNSPEAKABLE...**
HIDEOUS!!

HOUGH CALLICOTT WANTED TO RUN, MORE THAN
ANYTHING HE WANTED TO RUN, BUT INSTEAD HE
FELT HIS BODY MELTING DOWN THE DAMP CRYPT
WALL, AND ALL THE WHILE, THE SMALL
CHITTERING THINGS WERE LEAVING OLD
ELIAS' **BONE-PICKED BODY**, AND COMING
FOR HIM, COMING TO **DEVOUR** HOUGH! AND
HE WATCHED THEM COME, UNABLE TO MOVE
PARALYZED WITH FEAR!

I'LL BET YOU'RE WONDERING WHERE WE
UNEARTHED THAT LITTLE NUGGET! DIG IT!
THOSE BATS SHOULD'VE BEEN IN YANKEE
STADIUM. THREE STROKES AND YOU'RE OUT!



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of **EERIE**



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TURN AROUND!

AND

CHESS!

THUMP

THE NEXT

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"EERIE MONSTER GALLERY" CONTINUED FROM PAGE TWO

VLAD BEAT BACK THE INVADING TURKS, AND IN 1461, HE IMPALED ALL THE PRISONERS HE HAD TAKEN. THE NUMBER IS SET AT AROUND 20,000 MEN! THE IMPALED CORPSES OF VLAD'S VICTIMS FILLED AN ENTIRE VALLEY!

TODAY, ATOP A CRAGGY CLIFF OVERLOOKING THE INDUSTRIAL TOWN OF **BRAD**, ROMANIA, THERE STILL STANDS AN ANCIENT CASTLE ONCE INHABITED BY VLAD THE IMPALER'S FATHER, **VLAD DRACUL**. THIS IS BELIEVED BY SOME TO BE THE **CASTLE OF DRACULA** AS DESCRIBED BY BRAM STOKER!

HOWEVER, A FEW MILES TO THE SOUTH, IN THE TOWN OF **HUNEDOARA**, THERE EXISTS A CASTLE WHICH LEGEND SAYS WAS THE HOME OF THE YOUNGER VLAD. EITHER OF THESE TWO CASTLES COULD BE THE ONE STOKER HAD IN MIND!

TODAY, **TOURISTS** VISIT THE CASTLE AT BRAD, WHERE AN ANCIENT STONE PLACQUE PROCLAIMS IT AS THE HOME OF VLAD DRACUL. AND EVEN NOW, GUIDES WARN VISITORS TO STEP UP THE CASTLE STAIRCASE WITH THE **RIGHT FOOT** FIRST-- TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM THE EVILS OF DRACULA!

• BRAD
• HUNEDOARA

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ONE WAY TO GET
AHEAD!

END

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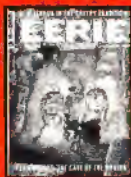
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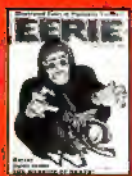
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